

**Assessment of USAID-CAP Peace Program  
Activities in Ixcán (Quiché)  
and Barillas (Huehuetenango)**

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The Communities in Transition Program

**BROADENING ACCESS AND STRENGTHENING  
INPUT MARKET SYSTEMS  
(BASIS)**

*Contract No. LAG-I-00-98-00031-00*

SUBMITTED TO:

U.S. Agency for International Development

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## ACRONYMS

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ACCESS	A database management and access software by Microsoft
AMV	<i>Asociación de Mantenimiento Vial</i> - Road Maintenance Association in Upala, Costa Rica
AMVI	<i>Asociación de Mantenimiento Vial de Ixcán</i> (Ixcán Road Maintenance Association)
ANACAFE	<i>Asociación Nacional de Cafecultores</i> (The National Association of Coffee Producers)
APESA	Company which did the environmental surveys and photo interpretation
ARC-VIEW	A database management program related to maps and the mapping of information
ARD	Associates in Rural Development, Inc.
ASOBAGRI	<i>Asociación Barillense de Agricultores</i> (The Farmers Association of Barillas)
BANRURAL	The national development bank
CECI	Canadian Center for Studies and International Cooperation
CEFacilita	<i>Consultoría Empresarial y Facilitación</i> (NGO offering management services)
CESIDE	<i>Central de Servicios Integrales para el Desarrollo</i> (Organization for Development Services) A private nonprofit organization
CHF	Cooperative Housing Foundation
CIT	Communities in Transition
COMUDUR	<i>Consejo Municipal de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural</i> (an expanded UTM and supported by the SEGEPLAN)
DECOPAZ	<i>Desarrollo Comunitario Para La Paz</i> (Internationally and Nationally funded community development program for the Peace Accords)

FDD	<i>Fondo de Desarrollo Democrático</i> (The Fund for the Development of Democracy)
FEDECOCAGUA	<i>Federación de Cooperativas de Café de Guatemala</i> (Federation of Guatemalan Coffee Cooperatives)
FHIA	<i>Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola</i> (Honduran Foundation for Agricultural Research)
FONAPAZ	<i>Fondo Nacional Para la Paz</i> (National Fund for Peace)
FORESTRADE	Corporate name for international commodities company promoting, certifying and marketing organic, sustainably produced products.
FUNDEAGRO	<i>Fundación de Desarrollo Agrícola, Ecuador</i>
GOG	Government of Guatemala
GTZ	German technical and social development agency
ICCPG	<i>Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales de Guatemala</i> (The Guatemalan Institute for Comparative Studies of Penal Sciences)
ICTA	<i>Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícola</i> (Institute for Agricultural Technology and Science) A semi-autonomous public entity
IDC	<i>Inversiones y Desarrollo de Centro America</i> (An organization which does investment studies and organizational development of organizations)
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IR	Intermediate Result, Part of USAID planning system, IRs make up SOs
LOTUS	Trade name for a spreadsheet software package
MINUGUA	<i>Misión Internacional de las Naciones Unidas en Guatemala</i> (United Nations Mission in Guatemala)
MSTAT	Michigan State Statistical Package – Software for data storage and analysis
RMTF	Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation

RFP	Request for Proposal
SAS	Statistical Analysis Software
SDF	Special Development Fund - managed by USAID
SEGEPLAN	<i>Secretaría General de Planaficación</i> (General Secretariat for Planning)
SO	Strategic Objective - used in USAID planning
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences - software
URNG	<i>Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional de Guatemala</i> (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTM	<i>Unidad Tecnico Municipal</i> (The technical unit of the local municipality for planning and engineering)

## PREFACE

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In 1995, USAID/Guatemala-funded two Cooperative Agreements to implement the “Communities in Transition Program” in order to support the Guatemalan Peace Accords and to help reestablish communities in the municipalities of Ixcán, Quiché and Barillas, Huehuetenango, where the conflict of the last 30 years had been most devastating. The Canadian Center for Studies and International Cooperation carried out their Cooperative Agreement in Barillas, and the Cooperative Housing Foundation implemented theirs in Ixcán.

This report presents findings on two very interesting and different approaches used by two private international development organizations in two very different ecological areas with different development potentials and socioeconomic organization. The impact of the era of conflict affected each municipality differently and added its legacy to the historical and ecological limits and options for development. The lesson learned, which may be applied to other places, is a methodological lesson rather than a technical lesson of what will or will not work because of the vast array of intervening variables which must be taken into consideration.

Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD), under IQC No. LAG-I-00-98-00031-00, placed a team of four specialists in the field: Ana Silvia Monzon – gender specialist from Guatemala; Carlos Rodriguez Chang – economist and specialist in agricultural practices from Guatemala; Sergio Cambroner – specializing in organizational development and conflict resolution; and Kris Merschrod, Team Coordinator from the USA, who has managed and evaluated projects with components similar to those reviewed in this evaluation.

During the fieldwork for this evaluation, a Spanish version was prepared and given to the USAID/Guatemala Mission and to the two organizations evaluated. The purpose of that version was to bring together, in a narrative format, the observations on the various activities implemented by both grantees for comment and discussion. This English language version is presented to respond directly to the specific questions of the Terms of Reference.

Following the Executive Summary is the body of the report with an introduction describing the purpose and the methodology of the evaluation, and then separate sections which respond to the “Primary Questions” and “Expected Outputs” of the Terms of Reference.

The evaluation team wishes to take this opportunity to thank all of the directors and team members for their patience and willingness to share their experiences, strengths, weaknesses, and ideas during the evaluation process. At the same time, we commend them for their accomplishments, enthusiasm, and dedication. Similarly, we appreciated the interest and enthusiasm that the USAID/Guatemala team had for the evaluation process and the projects; it was very encouraging and made making the presentations a pleasure.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Introduction

In January and February of 1999, Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD) was contracted to evaluate the “Communities in Transition Program” by USAID/Guatemala. The focus of the evaluation was the implementation of two Cooperative Agreements: one with the Canadian Center for Studies and International Cooperation (CECI) and the other with the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF). The assessment of the impact of these projects was carried out by a team of four specialists during a four-week period—one week reviewing material and interviewing in Guatemala City; one week in Barillas, Huehuetenango, where CECI is located; one week in Ixcán, Quiché, where CHF is located; and a final week preparing the report.

Given the detailed periodic and annual reports available, the strategy used for the evaluation was to examine the quality of the data and information systems; review the activities of the projects in the field and verify the reported progress; interview personnel and participants on the farm, in the communities, and in the organizations strengthened by the projects; reconstruct the model of development used by CHF and CECI; and, finally, meet with project personnel to present the findings for discussion.

In general, the Communities in Transition Program has begun to accomplish its goal of supporting the Peace Accords in these two municipalities at a very practical level by having a positive effect on individuals, families, communities, NGOs, markets, and the environment. It is an excellent basis upon which to build the second and subsequent phases of support. The project activities are appropriate and fit the illustrations used in the new “emerging incomes” Strategic Objective. Soberingly, one notes that these communities are now in a position to pick up and start the development process where they left off over 30 years ago before the violence began. Fortunately, today, there is a “green market” that offers opportunities for commodities which smallholders can produce from local inputs. They do not have to depend upon inputs that they were unable to obtain to participate in the “green revolution.” A great deal of the success of these two projects has to do with this new market and organic production practices.

### Differences in the Two Municipalities and Grantees

It was found that there are great differences between Barillas and Ixcán that present different options, as well as limitations, for implementing programs of reconstruction and development.

The economy of Barillas is based on a cash crop economy of coffee and cardamom. It has a cool, moist highland and a warm, moist lowland area; the latter also produces coffee, but of lower quality. Cardamom is produced predominantly in the lowland area and subsistence crops are produced in both areas. The highland area has many long-established communities with a few Cooperatives. In the lowlands, the communities are more recently established and have the characteristics of recently colonized areas—poor infrastructure and small communities. Nevertheless, the lowland is tied into the international coffee and cardamom marketing system through the town of Barillas. Barillas is a bustling market town with a great deal of construction.



Although communities were dislocated during the period of conflict, they were predominantly in the lowlands.

In contrast to Barillas, the capital of Ixcan, Cantabal, is a small market town which is less than 20 years old, having been created by dislocated people from Playa Grande during the period of violence. The municipality is lowland humid tropics with a rolling topography. The cropping is predominantly subsistence for household consumption and local exchange. Two corn crops per year are possible. There is some coffee, cardamom, and achiote, with a large farm producing hearts of palm. Nevertheless, the link to the international market is small compared with Barillas. The dislocations during the period of violence were extensive and, during a 30-year period, people moved or were moved out to Mexico and other parts of Guatemala and back again. This churning of the population has been the basis of conflict over land titles because the land was parceled prior to the period of violence, and new settlers were placed or came onto land that was left by refugees. This tension because of tenure issues is a constant complication for work in Ixcan; fortunately, CHF has appropriate methods for coping with this problem.

Just as there are major differences between Barillas and Ixcan, so, too, there are great differences in the background of CECI and CHF in the respective municipalities. CECI had carried out two projects (social infrastructure and conflict resolution) in Barillas, which gave it both contacts and knowledge of what could be done in the area. CHF had eight years of experience in Guatemala, but no experience in Ixcan. Accordingly, it had to start without a local base, but what made its start particularly difficult was that the armed conflict did not end until more than a year after the Chief of Party had moved to Ixcan. Although he had to live at the UN peacekeeping compound for security, it did not stop the initial work of getting to know the communities and starting an analysis of the possibilities for work.

The project proposals and budgets were also markedly different. As noted, CECI had experience in the area, and proposed activities and a corresponding budget that were appropriate for the task at hand. CHF, however, proposed inappropriate activities and a budget that was inadequate for the region.

## **Conflict Resolution**

Both programs used the same approach to conflict resolution (i.e., bring people together around a common need and encourage them to put differences aside while working together toward a common goal). It is important to realize that neither CECI nor CHF focused on old conflicts and their resolution.

## **Development Approaches**

Given the above, CECI and CHF began the task of development in each municipality in a different and yet appropriate manner.

CECI's strategy was to develop a producers' association that could intervene in the market place on behalf of the smallholders involved in cash cropping. As part of the strategy, it applied an old market reform paradigm--just prices and weights, a grading system, quality control and

compensation, public prices, and a free flow of information. To counteract the problem of middlemen advancing credit in exchange for crops at lower prices, lines of credit were established for pre-harvest costs and also for equipment to dry or process the crops. To this was added sustainable organic agricultural production and, finally, links to the organic commodity market, which offers a premium over traditional commodity grades. It is a very comprehensive model with details to avoid known problems. For example, many projects with producer groups add the management of credit to the services that the association must manage but, in this case, they used a fiduciary service of the local bank and a credit committee to take the day-to-day management out of members' hands.

For its part, CHF had more basic development tasks to work on in Ixcán. One of the most important tasks was to establish itself in an environment of distrust that was the result of the period of conflict. The major population dislocations and terror took place in the lowlands of Ixcán and Barillas, but the burden of this legacy fell on CHF's shoulders. Then, it focused on bridges and roads, social infrastructure, and, for the production side, started an innovative agroforestry extension program based on the combination of organic practices with woody legume and fast-growing tree species to conserve and improve soils of smallholder corn parcels. This approach was in response to surveys that showed that the top priority was roads. It also responded to the concern for the environmental deprivation of the area and declining productivity typical of tropical lowland soils under slash-and-burn systems. A communal banking program was initiated to offer women an opportunity to improve their incomes and businesses. The agroforestry practices will probably become the new "traditional" practices of subsistence farmers and have a major impact on slowing expansion of cleared land on smallholders' farms.

The other major long-term impact of the project will be the road maintenance association. It will be able to keep the roads of the municipality in year-round use and thus reduce transportation costs and increase access to services. Moreover, it is based on and helps form the basic democratic principles of inclusion and the acceptance of responsibility by all communities and micro-regions in its assembly and board. This brings the whole municipality together on its primary public focus at this stage of development. Environmental awareness is a constant theme throughout most of CHF's activities--the impact studies for infrastructure, the manuals for AMVI, the agroforestry systems, and primary teacher training and educational materials.

## **Women in Development**

Both projects approached the theme of women in development in a similar manner--mostly through credit programs that were managed by a third party, CESIDE. This activity was not well integrated in the form of a geographic focus so that women's enterprises would be in the same communities where the marketing and production activities were being conducted. This point is stressed because economic multipliers have been missed which could have taken advantage of the increased incomes from the cropping interventions. The increased cash flow in the communities would have made for more successful businesses based on the credit. CECI has had a more extensive array of credit vehicles, and the inclusion of women in them has been a plus. Both CECI and CHF have had vegetable plots as part of their extension program and this also has been aimed at women with good results. Nevertheless, the evaluators note that there

has not been an assiduous and systematic approach to seeking out and making way for women in the division of labor in order to enhance their incomes and status in the communities. CECI has identified that women play an important role in harvest and post-harvest handling of coffee and cardamom and has included them in the training--an essential element along the “Total Quality Path” (*Sendero de la Calidad*), which is crucial to the success of ASOBAGRI, the marketing association which CECI established. For its part, CHF, in 1996, began a project on a women’s organic vegetable and spice experimental farm in San Pablo, which was the first experimental agricultural activity of CHR. It has begun to incorporate women into the tree nursery program. Both projects need to do better.

## **Major Accomplishments**

The major accomplishments of the Communities in Transition Program are impressive considering the brief time that both organizations have been working in these municipalities.

### ***Barillas: CECI’s Accomplishments***

- Rehabilitation of ASOBAGRI
- Establishment of the “Total Quality Path” to coffee and cardamom quality
- Certification of organic coffee and cardamom
- Direct links to the international commodity market
- A system of four lines of credit with BANRURAL for ASOBAGRI’s members
- Producer groups for extension and marketing
- The formation of women’s groups and the inclusion of women in various aspects of the credit program – (production, microenterprise, and communal)
- Incorporation of women into production component training
- Positive modification of the pricing, grading, and weighing practices in the market
- Graduation of program borrowers to the formal banking services
- FFD & ICCGP as counterparts for training in conflict resolution
- Regional meeting of Women in Barillas in 1997.

### ***Ixcán: CHF’s Accomplishments***

- Establishment of a presence in Ixcán
- Rapid rural profiles of communities
- 1996 survey of all fruits, vegetables, and spices sold in the local market
- Validation and promotion of agroforestry systems
- Organizational development support from 1995 to the present for the Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation
- Organizational development of CESIDE for the expansion of credit services to the communities as a strategy for reaching women
- Agreement with ICTA for the use of the field station, the offices, and the recovery of the palm collection
- Construction and rehabilitation of roads
- Environmental studies and the Environmental Mitigation Manual for Infrastructure

- Development of the Ixcan Road Maintenance Association
- Environmental education program with the Ministry of Education
- Design of 50+ infrastructure projects and channeling of funds from SDF.

## **Limitations**

Both grantees had limitations or aspects that require continued attention.

### ***Barillas: CECI***

- Slight difference in organic/sustainable philosophy between CECI and ANACAFE
- Maintenance, training, and supplies for dryers (grease guns and fuse wire)
- System and supply of record keeping materials at cardamom dryers and also for the certification process at the village level
- Financial and human resource sustainability of ASOBAGRI
- Lack of integration of on-farm and off-farm activities in the same communities
- Inclusion of women in the promotion of new technology
- Sustainability of the microenterprise credit system.

### ***Ixcan: CHF***

- Sustainability of the communal banking system
- Financial and human resource sustainability of AMVI
- Lack of geographic integration of the communal banks and the agroforestry component; they should be in the same communities
- Slow response of FONAPAZ to fund projects, especially the transfers to AMVI
- Over-sized community training centers
- Increased participation of CHF personnel in COMUDUR (the expanded municipal technical unit)
- Closer and field-level activities with the Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations for new activities for the Communities in Transition Program include:

- 1) If not done already, then a study of the coffee, achiote, and cardamom organic products market and its potential should be added. This should be a USAID regional concern because organic coffee exports are being promoted in most coffee countries in the Americas. However, the organic market niche may not be adequate for the production being promoted.
- 2) The next four recommendations involve exchanges between CECI and CHF personnel. Funds and time need to be allocated in order for this to be done systematically. It would be useful to establish radio links between the two projects and to have a series of weekly conversations between personnel especially after they have seen each other's work and if marketing is coordinated.

- 3) Exchanges should be arranged between CECI and CHF on the marketing and production of cardamom. Cardamom was promoted in Ixcán two decades ago. The complaint of the farmers is that the price is low. On the other hand, CECI has promoted organic production and quality control and has been able to obtain about \$250/CWT in the organic market. CHF has proposed to look into cash crops during the second phase<sup>1</sup> but discards the potential for cardamom.
- 4) Exchanges should be made between CECI and CHF in agroforestry practices. The agroforestry systems that CHF has found to be appropriate with corn and beans could improve the systems of farmers in Barillas, especially in the lowland area. In addition, both CHF and CECI have done extensive work on organic vegetable and spice production that should be exchanged.
- 5) Exchange should occur between the mayors and UTMs of Barillas and Ixcán. Considering that many of the issues faced by each mayor are common and that both projects are trying to work with the UTMs and the mayors, it would be a useful strategy to let the mayors see what the projects are doing in each place and how the municipalities are developing as technical organizations to solve problems. Such an exchange might enhance the importance of the projects in the eyes of the mayors and the technical units.
- 6) A Forest Management Extension component should be added. “Agroforestry” has consisted of introducing a few forest species into the short-cycle cropping system, or the cultivation of cash crops in the shade of forest species. In neither case has the sustainable use of forests been the goal. This is not to denigrate the efforts by CECI or CHF, but the contrast must be clearly stated. The focus needs to be shifted to include the management of forest plots on the farms in the lowlands of Barillas and in Ixcán. A recent study by APESA shows that less than half of the area is in undisturbed forests. That figure, however, has to be put into the perspective that, with little exception, the land has been parceled and has owners, and the degree of intervention in the forest part of those parcels may range from 20 percent to 80 percent. Because of this, the strategy needs to focus on “woodlot” management and not extensive forest management for general conservation purposes; this is not a “commons” problem, but rather a family land use problem. One sees that forest products are undervalued and are being inefficiently harvested. If they are undervalued, there is little incentive to manage them. The recommendation is that a forest management activity be added to both projects, building upon the experience and education of the CHF Agroforestry Coordinator and the experience that the new CECI volunteer has from Africa. The goal should be the sustainable management of the forest plots to enhance family income. CECI’s experience with FORESTRADE could provide the link to the “green market” for wood and other forest products.
- 7) Women should be trained to manage labs to control “La Broca” (coffee bean borer biological control). The recommendation is that women in 10 communities, where the Broca is a problem and where there are organized groups of producers of organic coffee, be trained and that labs be established. This activity would directly support the quality control and organic coffee effort, and would create a new, enhanced role for women in the community.

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<sup>1</sup> Expansion Proposal, Communities in Transition, Cooperative Housing Foundation, Feb 1998, p.25

- 8) CECI and CHF have concrete exit strategies for their work with ASOBAGRI and AMVI. However, in the remainder of the activities, the objectives and goals are general and aggregated. It is recommended that these general objectives be converted to specific levels of accomplishment that would indicate that it is time to end the presence in given communities and in the municipalities. Toward this end, three examples of strategies were presented: agroforestry, communal and enterprise credit systems, and organic certification.

## I. INTRODUCTION

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### A. Purpose

In 1995, USAID began the Communities in Transition Program to assist the reconciliation process of refugee and displaced populations within their settlement communities in two of the most conflictive and isolated areas of the country--the municipalities of Barillas in Huehuetenango and Ixcán in the Department of Quiché. Given the passage of three years, the Mission prepared the Scope of Work for this evaluation in order to:

“Assess the impact of USAID's investments supporting reintegration and community strengthening through productive income-generating, conflict resolution, and physical infrastructure activities. Based on this experience, provide a forward-looking assessment to assist USAID and its partners in re-defining results under Intermediate Result No. 3 of the Special Peace Objective.”<sup>2</sup>

Two Cooperative Agreements were signed with international non-profit development organizations in 1995 to carry out the work (i.e., USAID's investments). The Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) of Maryland, USA was assigned to the Municipality of Ixcán, and the Canadian Center for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) of Canada was assigned to the Municipality of Barillas. Their work is the focus of this report.

### B. Methodology Used for the Evaluation

#### 1. *The Evaluation Team*

Associates in Rural Development, Inc. (ARD) was contracted under a standing IQC<sup>3</sup> to carry out the evaluation. The ARD team consisted of Ana Silvia Monzón, a Guatemalan with experience in gender analysis; Carlos Rodríguez Chang, a Guatemalan specializing in economic analysis and agricultural practices; Sergio Cambrónero, a Costa Rican specializing in organizational development and conflict resolution; and Kris Merschrod, of the United States, who served as Coordinator of the team and a specialist in evaluation (Mr. Merschrod has evaluated and managed projects with similar components to the projects being evaluated in Central and South America).

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<sup>2</sup> Objective, scope of work, RFP 520-98-P-031, p.3. 1998

<sup>3</sup> BROADENING ACCESS AND STRENGTHENING INPUT MARKET SYSTEMS (BASIS) CONTRACT NO. LAG-I-00-98-00031-00

## 2. *The Work Plan*

18 - 23 January	Revision of documentation from the CECI, CHF, and USAID/Guatemala offices as well as interviews of personnel in those offices.
25 - 31 January	Travel to Barillas, Huehuetenango to interview personnel of the CECI team, local government partners, counterpart and subgrantee personnel, international organization and program personnel; travel to communities involved in the program in order to verify and analyze the impact of the activities. At the end of the week the ARD team made a presentation of the findings and suggestions to the CECI team by means of a graphic model of the activities and their relation. By this means the team could confirm or correct the findings and relevance of the recommendations.
1 - 5 February	Travel to Ixcán, Quiché to interview personnel of the CHF team, local government partners, counterpart and subgrantee personnel, international organization and program personnel; travel to communities involved in the program in order to verify and analyze the impact of the activities. As in the case of the work in Barillas, at the end of the week the ARD team made a presentation of the findings and their suggestions to the CECI team by means of a graphic model of the activities and their relation. By this means the team could confirm or correct the findings and relevance of the recommendations.
6 - 12 February	The ARD team returned to Guatemala City, where interviews of USAID, CECI, and CHF counterpart and subgrantee personnel continued on a limited basis while the Spanish language presentation was written. Three complementary interviews were held with organizations which were not available in the field: The Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation; the <i>Fondo para el Desarrollo Democrático</i> ; and the Road Maintenance Association of Upala, Costa Rica, which has been advising CHF's project in Ixcán. Two presentations were made to USAID/Guatemala personnel on the initial impressions and, later, as an exit briefing. For the exit briefing, an Executive Summary was prepared to facilitate the briefing. At the end of the week, the ARD Coordinator compiled the Spanish version that was delivered on 14 February for Mission comments. While the Spanish language presentation is a narrative format, this English language presentation is based on a more direct response to the questions posed.



### 3. *Field Strategy for the Evaluation*

- Verify the data as presented in the CHF and CECI reports.
- 
- Examine the methods used by CECI and CHF to prepare their reports and to manage the data used therein.
- 
- Review the practices and accomplishments in the field by means of conversations with project personnel at field sites.
- 
- Interview beneficiaries and counterpart personnel about the activities and services provided to date.
- 
- Reconstruct the development models implicitly and explicitly used by the grantees and to use those models to discuss the findings with project personnel.



*CECI and ARD team with development model in Barillas.*



## **II. GOALS OF THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS IN RELATION TO THE USAID/GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA BILATERAL AGREEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE PEACE ACCORDS**

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Beginning in September of 1996, the United States signed a series of bilateral agreements with the Republic of Guatemala in support of the Peace Accords between the Government of Guatemala and the URNG (Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit).<sup>4</sup> This support was signed prior to and in support of the process leading to the Peace Accords and was reinforced by four amendments after the Peace Accords. There are eight accords that make up the Peace Accords:

- Human Rights
- Resettlement of Displaced People
- Commission for Clearing Human Rights Violations
- Identity and Rights of Indigenous People
- Socioeconomic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation
- Strengthening of Civil Power and the Function of the Military in a Democratic Society
- Constitutional Reform and the Electoral Process
- Incorporation of the URNG into the Legal Process.

In preparation for supporting the Peace Accords, USAID/Guatemala did a field survey in late 1994 to identify the needs and conditions of Barillas and Ixcán;<sup>5</sup> this became the basis for the Communities in Transition (CIT) Program. The purpose of the CIT Program is:

- generation of income and employment,
- conflict resolution, and
- organizational development of private and governmental entities in the conflict areas.

At the same time, the target population was specified as all groups in these municipalities regardless of their status as returnees or people who had stayed in the communities during the conflict. Terms of Reference for an RFP (No. 520-95-P-042) to elicit proposals from private development organizations were based on this survey and specified three classes of activities:

- on-farm productive activities that are based on sustainable ecological and economic practices;

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<sup>4</sup> “Special Objective Grant Agreement” with the Republic of Guatemala in September of 1996 in support of the peace agreement entitled “Identity and Rights of Indigenous People Accord” and “Socioeconomic and Agrarian Accord.” Project No. 520-0413; “Support the Implementation of the Peace Accords,” 13 January 1997, Project 520-0426; Amendment No. 1 to “Support the Implementation of the Peace Accords,” 30 July 1997, Project No. 520-0426; Amendment No. 2, “Support the Implementation of the Peace Accords,” 16 September 1997; Amendment No. 3, “Support the Implementation of the Peace Accords,” 21 April 1998; Amendment No. 4, “Support the Implementation of the Peace Accords,” 3 June 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Assessment Team Report on Returnee and Displaced Populations of Ixcán, Quiché and Barillas, Huehuetenango, USAID, internal document, 1995

- off-farm activities that will complement on-farm activities, mainly via credit systems such as communal banks or individual credits; and
- social infrastructure.

Of the 10 organizations that responded to the RFP in 1995, CHF and CECI were granted Cooperative Agreements to carry out activities which would respond to these three classes. The Cooperative Agreements reviewed in this evaluation, therefore, are related to the Peace Accords by very pragmatic approaches and through community activities involving the population directly and counterpart organizations that make up the new social fabric and socioeconomic life in the communities.

The activities and goals of the two Cooperative Agreements contribute directly to two of the eight Accords:

- Resettlement of Displaced People
- Socioeconomic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation

and partially to a third and fourth,

- Strengthening of Civil Power
- Human Rights.

### III. INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

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Both CECI and CHF have developed an extensive array of inter-institutional relations to bring about their accomplishments and to foment a lasting development capacity in the municipalities. Diagrams A and B in Annex I show these key organizations and their relationship to the activities carried out by the two grantees.

#### A. Barillas

CECI's key counterpart organizations are:

- ASOBAGRI – The Farmers' Association of Barillas
- ICCPG – The Guatemalan Institute for Comparative Studies of Penal Sciences (Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales de Guatemala)
- FDD – The Fund for the Development of Democracy (Fondo de Desarrollo Democrático)
- UTM – The technical unit of the local municipality for planning and engineering (Unidad Técnico de la Municipalidad)
- BANRURAL – The local branch of the national rural development bank
- CESIDE – A Guatemalan NGO specializing in the management of credit funds as well as studies and surveys related to development (La Central de Servicios Integrales para el Desarrollo)
- ANACAFE – The National Association of Coffee Producers
- FORESTRADE – An international company specializing in organically produced commodities
- ROYAL COFFEE – A coffee trading company with international links.

CECI has been part of two inter-institutional efforts (aside from its major project activities described below) in support of the development of Barillas: one has been with other international organizations to exchange information, and the second is related to the municipality. One of the efforts at the municipal level has been the development plan for Barillas. In support of the plan, CECI has provided an extensive database and software for the geographic information system, with corresponding training for personnel in the technical unit of the municipality. This will be of immediate and long-term assistance to the establishment of the technical capabilities of the municipality.

ASOBAGRI is the prime and foremost organizational development focus of CECI. ASOBAGRI is the vehicle for accomplishing the income-generation goal of the Cooperative Agreement, and virtually all of the activities contribute to and fortify the main purpose of ASOBAGRI: the unification of producers for the commercialization of coffee and cardamom. ASOBAGRI is considered a counterpart because it was an existing organization. In CECI's original proposal, the goal was to form a producers' association, but then it was decided to build upon this existing organization as a more efficient means to the end.

Part of the network that CECI developed builds upon its previous projects in the area, specifically its work with the FFD and ICCGP for developing conflict resolution abilities in the communities. This was an important relationship to provide a service to the project that impacted directly upon the communities in which CECI carried out other activities.

One of the key needs for supporting smallholder coffee production, and for marketing via ASOBAGRI, is credit. Credit for these producers was usually provided by intermediaries who, in exchange, bought the coffee at low prices. With project funds CECI established four lines of credit by means of a fiduciary relationship with BANRURAL. By this mechanism, credit is provided for equipment for post-harvest handling of coffee and cardamom, for harvesting expenses, for ASOBAGRI to buy coffee, and used with CESIDE for microenterprise loans. The importance of this mechanism, beyond the provision of credit, is four-fold: 1) it builds upon existing, specialized organizations rather than trying to build a credit capacity in ASOBAGRI (a very common practice which is not too successful); 2) it brings BANRURAL into a formal relationship with ASOBAGRI and CESIDE; 3) it links BANRURAL directly with the smallholders as well as with microenterprises; and 4) it extends BANRURAL's system into the remote communities. These aspects provide for an experience that should be the basis for future, institutionalized credit for smallholders beyond the immediate urban area of Barillas after the Cooperative Agreement ends.

ANACAFE, with USAID funds, was operating in the area prior to the Cooperative Agreement. CECI entered into an agreement with ANACAFE to support the expansion of ANACAFE to 10 more communities. The program offered by ANACAFE is an extension service in sustainable coffee culture. This complements and extends the reach of the extension service that CECI offers to the groups that comprise ASOBAGRI. ANACAFE brought to the program considerable experience in coffee culture and methods in biological control. Unfortunately ANACAFE's effort to introduce the biological control for "La Broca" was tried in only one community, where it failed because the villagers chosen were either not capable or because they were not trained well in 1998. Nevertheless, this effort can enhance CECI's organic production and certification approach if expanded and given a gender approach as per the "Recommendations" section of this report.

To enhance the marketing opportunities for ASOBAGRI, CECI began a program of certified, organically produced coffee and cardamom. To bring this about, FORESTRADE was contacted and an agreement was made for FORESTRADE to help CECI train its personnel and prepare ASOBAGRI and the production groups to meet certification standards. At the same time, FORESTRADE provided the link to international organic commodity markets. This market provides for a premium above the prices normally offered for coffee and cardamom. It is a service that enhances ASOBAGRI's position for its members. In the same way, the link to Royal Coffee accesses markets not available locally for coffee and cardamom that do not meet certification standards.

In this way, credit, technical expertise, and marketing linkages form an integrated network of support for CECI's strategy of building a network of producer groups and a producer-managed association which, in turn, is the vehicle for delivering better and more stable prices to producers and, hence, enhanced incomes. Clearly, this network results in synergism which CECI and the

Cooperative Agreement made possible; none of the individual counterpart efforts could have produced the final result without having been so tightly coordinated.

The only weak aspect of the inter-institutional relations was found to be between the CESIDE microenterprise loan program and the remainder of the project; the microenterprise loans were not focused on the communities in which the remainder of the activities are carried out. Accordingly, some opportunities for synergies were missed. Specifically, other businesses in a community increase the multiplier, or circulation, of increased incomes from the other activities. This, in turn, helps increase the success of the business and the recovery of the loans.

## **B. Ixcán**

CHF's key counterpart organizations are:

- FONAPAZ (Fondo Nacional Para la Paz) National Fund for Peace
- SDF (USAID's Special Development Fund)
- ICTA (Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícola) The Institute for Agricultural Technology and Science
- Ministry of Education
- RMTF The Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation
- CESIDE - (La Central de Servicios Integrales para el Desarrollo) A Guatemalan NGO specializing in the management of credit funds as well as studies and surveys related to development
- BANRURAL – The local branch of the national rural development bank
- UTM (Unidad Técnica Municipal) which has evolved into COMUDUR
- COMUDUR (Consejo Municipal de Desarrollo Urbano y Rural Ampliado) An expanded advisory body on rural and urban development
- AMVI (Asociación de Mantenimiento Vial de Ixcán) The Ixcán Road Maintenance Association.

The development process in Ixcán began at a much more basic level than in Barillas (i.e., community infrastructure). CHF's original budget and work plan had to be changed to meet this need; this led to the development of an important relationship with the special development fund of USAID to fund social infrastructure. This line of funds had not been used in that region of the country before, and access to these funds was important for establishing a relationship with the communities. In retrospect, however, it would have been much more efficient to have budgeted and funded these activities directly through the Cooperative Agreement since SDF requirements imposed restrictions and additional layers of approval and reporting upon the usual Cooperative Agreement procedures. For example, SDF funds cover 50 percent of the material inputs for community projects, and the remainder of the funds must come from community or other donor sources in addition to funds for the non-material inputs. This entailed the involvement of two or more organizations in each project. Nevertheless, CHF's work in accessing these funds has been a substantial accomplishment.

Funds for the development of the Ixcán Road Maintenance Association were provided from USAID Economic Development Funds through FONAPAZ, the Government of Guatemala fund

that was established with funding from international donors to support the implementation of the Peace Accords. While this was a useful way to channel this type of fund for the establishment of AMVI, it carried with it additional administrative work; it meant that CHF had to establish accounting procedures that also met the Government of Guatemala format. At the same time, because the funds were changed to local currency prior to expenditures, value was lost in the devaluation. This real loss of funding is a threat to the planned time that the funds will carry AMVI as it works toward the breakeven point. These drawbacks aside, CHF brought additional funds to the project area by being an excellent inter-institutional networker.

Another area in which CHF showed itself to be resourceful and an excellent negotiator with organizations in the area was the agreement with *ICTA (Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícola)* for the use of the Research Station and the office and housing compound in Cantabal. The research station has a considerable collection for palms and other non-tradition crops, which will become the seed stock for the next phase of crop diversification that CHF is promoting-- hearts of palm. Moreover, the station provides a training ground for the extension agents and areas to test and demonstrate the agroforestry systems. Without the offices and housing, the CHF team would have been hard-pressed to establish itself and the agroforestry component.



*Vanilla stand on ICTA Station in IXCAN.*

Environmental awareness is one of the concerns that the Mission and environmentalists have had for this area of Guatemala. Again CHF showed its inter-institutional acumen and creativity by a training program for schoolteachers in the area. This was backed up with teaching materials such as posters and manuals and, importantly, by a small grants program for the teachers to do school/community projects relating to the environment. Recognition of this training by the Ministry of Education shows the inter-institutional importance of the program.

The inter-institutional effort by CHF to establish a communal banking program involves CESIDE and BANRURAL. In the case of the former, CHF is providing technical assistance for the organizational development of CESIDE while accomplishing the goal of credit to groups of women in the communities. BANRURAL's role in this program is to provide bank accounts for each of the 11 communal banks. This approach fits the original proposal by CHF to strengthen



local organizations during the project period so that they will be able to carry on. Again, as in the CECI program, the microenterprise credit program is not geographically integrated with the other components and communities of the project. This is lamentable for the gender implications. These credit programs have been important activities for the inclusion of women, but they are not tied in as well as they could be to the whole program; more geographical overlap is needed.

In Ixcán, as in Barillas, there is a municipal development plan based on the needs of the communities and microregional representation. Ixcán has progressed much further than Barillas, having established priorities and plans for the services. Furthermore, the municipality's organization for planning and implementing the plan has also evolved into a much more participatory body than the original UTM and is now called the COMUDUR, which is a body made up of various committees by sector. CHF was an active participant on various committees of the UTM, but as of late, has not kept up with representation on the committees of the COMUDUR. This lapse can be corrected because CHF's participation and leadership is appreciated by COMUDUR members and leadership. It is an important form and has leadership that is linked to the SEGEPLAN--the general secretariat for planning--which has funding from the European Economic Community and the Spanish government for the promotion of these municipal plans and the participatory mode for carrying it out. This mode, representation by the communities and the micro-regions, fits the organizational structure that CHF used to establish the Ixcán Road Maintenance Association as well as the community projects.<sup>6</sup>

The most ambitious inter-institutional effort that CHF has undertaken is related to the creation of AMVI, the Road Maintenance Association. Aside from the inter-institutional effort to provide a funding mechanism for the creation of AMVI, which was described above, CHF has undertaken the task of training and supporting the AMVI board in the establishment of links to the municipal government, the board of directors of each micro-region, FONAPAZ, and DECOPAZ. The latest initiative is to register the roads of Ixcán with the Ministry of Communication, Transportation, Public Works and Housing so that central government funding for road maintenance will be available to the municipality and, in turn, to fund AMVI's work. Their future networking plans include more and closer links to the central government to assure the immediate and long-term success of AMVI.

In summary, both CECI and CHF have been active and constant networkers with inter-institutional accomplishments. In general, CECI has been establishing more linkages with private organizations to accomplish its goals and has been in a better position to do so because the relationships depend upon CECI's funding. On the other hand, CHF has been concentrating on relations with government (national and international) agencies to bring additional resources to the project area to complement its original small budget. From this perspective, CHF has not been in as strong a negotiating position as CECI because it did not have the funds to use for leverage.

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<sup>6</sup> While difficult to document, one notes that there is a bit of European "stand-offishness" when it comes to working closely with an U.S. organization. The option is a low profile, which CHF has been employing, and to help out when possible.

It is important to keep in mind that the array of inter-institutional possibilities for the two organizations depended upon the development options in each area as well as their respective budgets. Even though the public sector services in Barillas are underdeveloped, the municipality offered more private sector options than Ixcan due to the cash crop economy. Ixcan, on the other hand, required more public domain types of development effort while offering little more than a subsistence agricultural base. This difference determined the inter-institutional options for both CECI and CHF.

#### **IV. GRANT ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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Both CECI and CHF approached the task of conflict resolution at two levels:

- a very pragmatic level of supporting and carrying out community activities by working with all parties for common benefits. The idea is that by working with each other on common needs and problems, people will put their differences behind them for present and future mutual benefit. Examples are bridges, community infrastructure, and marketing efforts; and
- by means of other, specialized organizations that would work in the same and broader geographic areas on training in conflict resolution and also in mediation for specific conflicts.

##### **A. Barillas**

CECI had an ongoing agreement with the Fund for Democratic Development (FDD) since 1994, which it brought to the Cooperative Agreement and then further strengthened with funds from the Cooperative Agreement. CECI proposed this activity under its Peasant Organization component with the purpose of “seeking immediate and informal solutions to conflicts between farmers.” At the same time, they proposed that the activity follow up on the action plans in the micro-regions of the Municipal Development Plan and support the resolution of conflicts that may arise in the course of planning. It should be pointed out that CECI did not pretend to resolve the profound differences between groups, but sought to facilitate reconciliation when differences would arise.

At the same time, through the FDD, CECI proposed working with the Guatemalan Institute for Comparative Studies of Penal Sciences (ICCPG). Its principal areas of work are: 1) Administration of Criminal Justice, 2) Alternative Means to the Resolution of Justice, 3) Administration of Justice for Youth and Adolescents, and 4) Human Rights.

With this support, CECI proposed to work with 30 community leaders in 10 communities on conflict resolution, plus added the development of 10 productive activities in those same communities which would support conflict resolution efforts. In addition, the specialists of the ICCPG would attend meetings of the inter-institutional coordinating committee to work on conflicts that might arise during 1997 and 1998. In fact, ICCPG went beyond the original target of 30 leaders in 10 communities to accomplish the following in 1997:

- A diagnostic of the communities with regard to pending conflict areas.
- Among the 92 communities in the municipality of Barillas, 219 informative, educational, and mediation events were held which supported conflict resolution.
- 215 people were trained in conflict resolution methods in these communities, benefiting an estimated 6,174 people.

As these figures show, the effort went way beyond the original target of 10 communities and 30 leaders during the first year of the effort.

In 1998, the second year of the plan, ICCPG did a survey of a sample of the population and found that during the year, 78 percent of the people had used the negotiation methods of the training program and that of those 78 percent:

- 50 percent had used the techniques for community conflicts,
- 30 percent had used the techniques for conflicts related to coffee disputes, and
- 20 percent had used the techniques in family conflicts or other disputes.

In 1998, ICCPG carried out 18 workshops at which 611 people attended. The participation of women was sought with the result that 30 percent of the participants were women. The participation of women as promoters has not been good (only 5 percent); ICCPG notes this in its reports. Attracting women and gaining their participation remains a challenge in this cultural context. It should be further pointed out that 11 of the workshops were in communities that were the focus of other CECI activities, assuring synergism between Cooperative Agreement-funded activities.

In spite of these accomplishments, both the director of CECI (Jean Laflamme) and the coordinator of the FDD (Lucrecia Paniagua) believe that a lot more could have been accomplished had there been better coordination in the field and in the planning between CECI and FDD. The areas of difficulty are logistics--transportation and convoking meetings and workshops, and the rotation of personnel on both CECI and ICCGP's part.

## **B. Ixcan**

CHF and the Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation (RMTF) established an informal relationship prior to the CHF response to the RFP.<sup>7</sup> In the response, CHF proposed that the RMTF would provide planning, training, and logistical and program development support to CHF and that one of the outputs would be approximately 60 workshops in conflict resolution in the project area. Apparently CHF overestimated the capacity and interest of the RMTF at the time of the proposal to work at these levels because the intended areas of collaboration were never developed. However, the RMTF did play roles in the mediation of conflicts in Ixcan which were directly related to communities where CHF was carrying out activities (e.g., the conflict between members and new settlers in the Ixcan Grande Cooperative).<sup>8</sup>

It must be recalled that the RMTF was formed in 1993 out of the funds and funding received by the Rigoberta Menchu Tum, the Nobel Peace Laureate. As such, it was a new organization with grassroots approaches to development and organization. Its approach to peace and conflict

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<sup>7</sup> CHF had helped the RMTF with fundraising in the U.S. by introducing them to public officials and private philanthropists in New York and Washington.

<sup>8</sup> It is easy to underestimate or overlook these instances because the impact is at the psychological and symbolic level. For example, when the Mayaland Bridge was inaugurated in 1998, the Director of the RMTF, ex-URNG leader, and the ex-mayor of Ixcan each gave a speech on reconciliation and shook hands. Both were bitter enemies and the public could not oversee the importance of the event.

resolution was at the macro level. It did not have the day-to-day management and planning skills that CHF had from years of development-project design and management. At the time of the evaluation, the RMTF had 28 ongoing activities, with as many coordinators working diverse activities from community development to human rights. Early in the development of the Cooperative Agreement, CHF saw that the real need of the RMTF was organizational development so that it could meet the new demands and opportunities made possible by international funding.

In keeping with CHF's original strategy of building local organizations, an agreement was made with a Guatemalan organization (*Inversiones y Desarrollo de Centro America –IDC*) to provide the RMTF with technical assistance. This assistance would enable the Foundation to meet international managerial and financial standards as well as project itself for the long term. This technical assistance began in 1997 and consisted of:

- A diagnosis of the organizational capabilities – planning, training, supervision, finance, personnel, and information systems.
- An action plan focusing on personnel administration, information systems, and financial systems and internal control.
- Installation of financial software.

Personnel from both RMTF and IDC confirm that the technical assistance has had very positive impacts on the Foundation as an organization. They believe that the Foundation is ready to meet reviews equivalent to the old A-133 for non-profit registration with the Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation of USAID. This is a substantial accomplishment for only two years of work and will be of great support to the Peace Accords at the national and international level. This is beyond the original local focus of CHF's proposal to USAID; nevertheless, as an unanticipated result, it will further USAID's overall objective of supporting the Peace Accords. In relation to the activities in communities that show the CHF approach to conflict resolution, one has to review the anecdotal material found in the 1998 annual report to appreciate the accomplishments, for example:

“Representatives from Santa María Tzejá and San José la 20 analyzed the need for a bridge between the two communities and then presented their proposal to CHF. San José la 20 is a town that the Guatemala Army militarized as a block to guerrilla patrols. Each male in the town received military weapons and was required to stand post one day out of six. Santa María is a town whose inhabitants fled to Mexico and stayed there for about a decade and who have now returned to farm on their original lands. These two groups of people have a history of conflict and little or no track record of working together. In this context, the bridge project is much more than a physical infrastructure project, but is helping to lay the cornerstone of a new relationship between former enemies. With the completion on the bridge, students in San José la 20 can more easily attend school in Santa María Tzeja and several farmers can more easily travel to their lots on the other side of the bridge.

And,

“A similar process occurred in Kaibil Balam where two conflictive groups from the same town worked together in the construction of the training center. Threats and violent

conflict were a common practice between the two groups. The training center gave both sides the opportunity to put behind their differences and work together to provide a much needed and common facility in their community.”

The agroforestry component has similar results to report:

“In the community of Montealegre, farmers are divided along two lines: those who served with the CPR (Communities of Populations in Resistance) and those who served with the Civil Self-defense Patrols (the government militia). Initially, the two groups wanted nothing to do with each other and refused to participate in the agroforestry program with the other. As a result, only one farmer, Don Pablo, who was highlighted in the last annual report, implemented the new agroforestry system. After tireless promotion by the Promoter and seeing the results of Don Pablo’s work, there are now 19 farmers implementing agroforestry systems from both groups. The farmers work together on a community nursery and share information about the different systems. According to the Promoter, “we used to be two communities, now we are one.”

Two Promoters in the component have also confronted the past and resolved issues left by the war. Rolando Guillen was a member of the Civil Self-defense Patrols of the military, and Rosenda Sales was a member of the United Guatemalan Revolutionaries (the guerrilla movement). In discussing the war, the two realized that not only had they served on different sides, but that they had been in a battle against each other 15 years earlier. These Promoters now rely on each other for support, information and partnership.”

Thus we see how both CHF and CECI used a very pragmatic approach to conflict resolution at the communal level. Both proposed to do so with a formal training component to prepare personnel, community leaders, and facilitators, but only CECI could implement this approach through FDD and ICCGP. CHF’s proposed counterpart was not appropriate for the training and thus CHF did this using the pragmatic approach described as it carried out the other activities. It remains to be seen if the training will make a difference between the two areas. Training aside, if this approach can be summarized in a few words, the approach is to build on common present needs, focus on the immediate future, work on projects, and let the people put conflicts behind them. Neither CECI nor CHF seeks to bring people together to come to agreement about past differences of a political, military, or philosophical nature. This approach should be replicable in other similar situations.

## **V. GRANT ACTIVITIES THAT FACILITATE REINTEGRATION AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNAL STRUCTURES**

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Both municipalities were isolated by the conflict and also by the poor road and communication systems prior to the period of conflict. As a result, the market system was primitive and inefficient. In addition, internal roads were very poor, and it was not until 1997 that efforts were renewed to connect the two municipalities. It should be noted that Barillas, the market town, was much better connected to Guatemalan systems than Ixcán. The lower part of the municipality, however, was the same or worse than Ixcán (i.e., over 60 percent of the communities do not have more than mule trails as access to all-weather roads). At the same time, especially in the lower area of Barillas and all of Ixcán, the conflict had isolated one community from another. The period of violence also caused the disruption of community organizing and group activities.

Both projects focused on internal reintegration and links to the rest of the country in different ways because of the basic differences in the ecology and related economy of the two municipalities that dictated what was possible and what was relevant. Their strategies involved building new or reinforcing existing regional and community organizations.

### **A. Barillas**

The higher altitudes of Barillas have been the source of quality coffee production since prior to the era of conflict. Communities of smallholders in those areas have been established since the last century. Coffee and cardamom production has been and is the basis for cash cropping, which, in turn, has supported the growth of the town of Barillas. The lower altitudes of the municipality were more recently settled and have the characteristic of colonization (i.e., small communities without much division of labor based on subsistence agriculture). Nevertheless, these lower areas produce lower quality coffee that is marketed through Barillas. Barillas' link to the city of Huehuetenango is, in part, due to this cash crop trade. All of the communities also produce food crops for local consumption.

Smallholder cash crop importance in this municipality is the focus and basis for the activities of the Cooperative Agreement managed by CECI. Had the basis of the local economy been subsistence food crops, then the approach used by CECI (marketing association with links to the international organic food niche) would have been inappropriate.

The most substantial and widespread effort to integrate the communities of Barillas in the economic sphere was the rehabilitation of ASOBAGRI (Barillas Agricultural Association) and its role as a buyer of coffee and cardamom. This effort provided for the integration of producers within the municipality and, also, with the national and international markets. Coffee and cardamom were important crops in Barillas for decades, but the marketing system was marked by inefficiencies due to a lack of grading, quality control, and information systems. With this were the usual problems of unfair weights and intermediaries who were not tied into the world market system except through other intermediaries.

The success of ASOBAGRI starts by organizing producer groups at the community level. In some of the communities, coffee cooperatives existed from the earlier FEDECOAGRO system, but these cooperatives were dormant as marketing units until CECI began working with them in 1996. One of CECI's gender accomplishments was in the reorganization of these cooperatives (i.e., the inclusion of women as members). The previous organizations did not have female members.

These groups are the focus of the coffee extension program to increase productivity through organic coffee culture practices. They also receive orientation on post-harvest handling of coffee and cardamom to improve the quality of the product, and orientation on marketing by joining ASOBAGRI. This system not only improves the quantity and quality of coffee and cardamom that helps strengthen ASOBAGRI and increases incomes, it also adds to community organizations and integrates or improves the social fabric of the community. At the municipal level it provides a means to integrating the communities into a marketing system in which they participate as members of the assembly and board of ASOBAGRI.



*Women are now members of coffee cooperatives – Quixabaj, Barillas.*

One of the substantial changes that the project has brought about was the participation of community members on the assembly of ASOBAGRI and also on the board. Prior to the work by CECI, the board was made up of coffee traders and urban professionals from the town of Barillas. This reorientation toward inclusion fosters a better integration of the communities as well as strengthened community groups.



*Board of Directors in Quixabaj coffee coop - note radio to the left.*

The other major impact of the CECI approach to coffee and cardamom was the promotion and certification of organic production which allowed it to link up with FORESTRADE, a major international certifier and trader of organically produced commodities. By this means they were able to vertically integrate the production system from the farm to the community to the region and, finally, to the international market. Part of the integration is related to the phone links to New York and other international commodity markets and traders, which are extended to the community level by short



wave radio. Via the radios, farmers know the prices and can sell their harvests to ASOBAGRI, which, in turn, sells the harvests to its buyers in the international market. This degree of integration, in view of the isolation and alienation that these farmers experienced only three years ago, is a radical and profound accomplishment. Of course this integration strengthens ASOBAGRI as an organization.

Prior to ASOBAGRI's information system and direct marketing to national and international traders, local prices were subject to local manipulation with the result that farmers received less for their crops. CECI was strengthening 12 groups of farmers to implement this system. Part of the system is to train farmers to work together to depulp and clean coffee and to dry cardamom. This work is done by community organizations that are built upon the farmer extension groups that CECI has established. By this means, 350 families were directly related to the effort, but the impact of the marketing and information system is much more important as a moderating influence on the whole marketing system of coffee and cardamom in the municipality. In the past year ASOBAGRI's focus has been on price stability as related to the international market.

It is important to point out that ASOBAGRI's first strategy to stabilize prices was to control 20 percent of the coffee traded in Barillas. This strategy failed in 1997 when local intermediaries bid up the prices beyond the international causing ASOBAGRI to acquire coffee at prices that they could not recover, and they lost money. The strategy has been refined to simply using the international prices and not trying to obtain a market share. This maximizes benefits to the population as a whole, as well as members, but does not maximize profits to ASOBAGRI as an association because maximum profits will come from maximized volumes. Thus the whole system integrates the whole municipality into the international commodities market on much more favorable terms.

The credit system with CESIDE and BANRURAL also has an integrating aspect that may be overlooked. Businesses that have been successful in using their loan establish a reputation with BANRURAL, which then makes subsequent loans directly to the business person. Although this has come to pass on less than 12 businesses, it is the beginning of the integration of the small business into the formal credit system. In the case of ASOBAGRI's program of pre-harvest credit, through a CECI fiduciary agreement with BANRURAL, we also see the beginning of the formal system reaching previously excluded smallholders.

## **B. Ixcán**

The municipality of Ixcán consists of lowland humid tropics with relatively recent colonization that had been promoted by the Government of Guatemala with USAID assistance since the 1970s as a way to reduce population pressure on the highlands. In the intervening period of conflict, the colonization was disrupted and then promoted by the military to establish new settlers where displaced communities had been. Subsistence crops by smallholders are the dominant agricultural systems. There were promotions of cardamom and achiote in the late 1970s, but their prices declined in the region. There is some coffee production, but cash cropping does not dominate the economy. During the era of conflict, great dislocations of communities took place with the result that communities fled to Mexico and to other Departments of Guatemala. At the same time, new settlers were located and then groups that had

fled returned. This churning of the population led to the disintegration of communities and the municipality. Moreover, the cooperatives seemed to be targets of the “scorched earth” tactics and this destroyed much of the communal-level and inter-communal organization in this municipality. Due to the violence and the reputation of terror in the municipality, Ixcan was further isolated from the rest of the country’s services and human resources, and community organizations declined, as group meetings could be unsafe or considered subversive.

It was in this context that CHF began the implementation of its Cooperative Agreement in 1995. In fact, the area immediately around Ixcan was under fire for the first year of CHF’s presence in Ixcan. Under the circumstances (disintegrated communities and subsistence cropping), the first priority for CHF was to establish a reputation in the area and to gain entree. In surveys of the population it was found that roads and bridges were, and continue to be, the highest priority because of the need to reach services and markets. The activity that CHF could begin was also an activity that responded to the immediate needs of newly resettled people and to communities isolated by poor roads: social infrastructure and bridges. In this context the task of “integration” is completely different from the municipality of Barillas. As noted above, these projects facilitated political and social integration. The options are not as diverse and the needs are more basic. Road-building activities occurred prior to the CHF’s presence, but the need for bridges to link the segments of the main road was crucial. CHF planned and supervised the construction of three concrete bridges and two steel Bailey bridges, as well as the improvement of a landing strip at an isolated community. This was an important first step to integrate the municipality. Along with these major projects was the strengthening of community improvement committees and their incorporation into the decision-making and planning process for social infrastructure. These types of committees are the first step in a cumulative process of organizational development.

Following upon the immediate need of roads is the need to maintain those roads. In high rainfall areas such as Ixcan, gravel roads that are not given regular annual maintenance will disappear after two or three years. Accordingly, in late 1996, CHF proposed and started the development of the Ixcan Road Maintenance Association (AMVI) based on a model association which the CHF Director established in Costa Rica as part of the Northern Zone Development Project. As well as the integration that improved roads would foment, AMVI was based on an assembly of representatives from each community and also a board of directors elected to represent each micro-region. This geographical representation is the beginning of the integration of the municipality socially via a decision-making body. At the same time, the committees in each micro-region are strengthened by being able to accomplish projects. This is the social equivalent of the economic integration by ASOBAGRI in Barillas.

At the community level, CHF did the feasibility studies and designs for over 50 projects. Twelve of these projects have been completed providing schools, water systems, and training centers. These projects helped bring together the population of the communities to carry out these projects. The services that they make possible help to integrate these communities around these committees. Other social infrastructure projects have become focal points for community efforts to raise funds. As related in the section on conflict resolution, these activities bring the community together around simple community structures.

## VI. EFFECTIVITY OF THE IMPLEMENTERS

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Both CECI and CHF have been effective implementers of the projects. CECI built upon an existing base of previous projects and organizations. They immediately went about the organizational development task of rebuilding the marketing organization while complementing and supporting it with an extension program and links to new international markets. The diverse credit lines that support the other project activities were set up quickly and run smoothly. These are substantial accomplishments for the first three years and fulfill what was proposed originally. At the community level, the accomplishments have been equally impressive in terms of the number of coffee depulpers and cardamom dryers funded or rehabilitated (25 communities vs. the original target of 10 communities served by the project). The most effective accomplishment for delivering greater income to the producer has been the change in the way coffee is traded in the municipality. By example, through ASOBAGRI, CECI introduced fair weights and grades where there was a long tradition of docking and cheating, and this was accompanied, very effectively, by prices linked to the international market that reduced the margin between the Barillas price and the Huehuetenango price. At the same time, by assuring working capital at the time of buying, prices in the market were reinforced. This complete system caused intermediaries to change practices in order to compete, with the result that producers, in general, benefited.

CECI could have been more effective had the microenterprise line of credit, aimed mostly at women, been geographically coordinated with the rest of the project activities so that there would have been a greater geographic overlap providing multipliers on the one hand, and assuring more income availability for the microenterprises on the other. The effectiveness of the improved depulping and cardamom drying installations could be compromised if the materials for maintenance (grease guns and fuse wire) are not provided and community participants are not trained in their purpose and use. In the final analysis, the effectiveness of the project will be measured in the next two to three years. Effectiveness will hinge on factors such as ASOBAGRI repeating the success of the past year, organic coffee and cardamom increasing as a proportion of the harvests, and that market continuing to offer a premium to the producers.

CHF's initial effectiveness was limited by three factors: 1) the ongoing violence during the first year, 2) an inappropriate proposal for the context of Ixcán, and 3) an inadequate budget. However, the CHF project chief effectively reoriented the project via the work plan and established inter-institutional links that brought more resources to the project. Fortunately, USAID tripled the funding in late FY97, making funds and personnel available so that the project could work toward project goals. The project as now structured really did not exist during the first two years of the project. As described above, while the project chief was very effective in bringing other funds and resources to the project, the source of funding required much more paperwork than if funds had been directly available through the Cooperative Agreement. That initial period having passed, the effectiveness of the project since late 1997 or early 1998 to date should be considered the pattern by which the project should proceed during a second phase. It built upon those first years' community relations, links to local organizations, and access to ICTA's research station and facilities, effectively establishing an agricultural extension program which introduces practices that are being adopted and that are replacing the

traditional short-cycle slash and burn. The other major component that appears to be effective is the establishment and development of AMVI, the Ixcan Road Maintenance Association. The final effectiveness of both of these components will be determined in the next two to three years. Effectiveness in the former component will depend on whether or not the agroforestry practices are adopted by the majority of the farmers in the communities where they have been promoted to date. In the latter component, effectiveness will be determined when AMVI has achieved the contracts necessary to support itself economically and, consequently, has taken over road maintenance.

## **VII. CONTINUATION OF SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO THE EMERGING INCOMES STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

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All of the activities of both the CECI and CHF Cooperative Agreements are directly relevant to Strategic Objective 2 and the four Intermediate Results.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the illustrative activities in the SO 2 document fit the activities of both of these projects. The initial conflict resolution activities of the first phase have been completed, and the overall conflict resolution strategy of both CECI and CHF, bringing people together to work on current needs, will continue. The only ongoing activity that is not included in SO 2 is AMVI. However, AMVI should be completed by the end of the next phase of the CHF project (September 2000) and should not need support if the CECI and CHF projects are assumed under SO 2. The evaluators believe that none of the present activities should be eliminated or curtailed during the second phase of these projects.

The conclusion that, “All of the activities of both the CECI and CHF Cooperative Agreements are directly relevant to Strategic Objective 2 and the four Intermediate Results,” is reached based on the following references and cited evidence.

### ***Reference:***

USAID/G-CAP’s Strategic Objective 2 has as its primary objective “to increase the capacity of a significant number of poor rural families – particularly women and the indigenous – in selected areas of the country to improve their economic condition.”

### ***Evidence:***

Barillas, Huehuetenango and Ixcán, Quiché are two of the “12 key population centers” where the Mission has chosen to concentrate its resources. Thus the geographic focus of the two projects fits the geographic focus of the SO. The target beneficiaries specified in the SO are also the same target population of the project activities of the CIT Program (see three-fold table on page 6 of cited SO paper). The focus on women is particularly important in CECI’s rehabilitation of the coffee cooperatives where women had not participated previously. The enterprise credit and the communal banking systems of CECI and CHF are the other, important activities focused specifically on the plight of women. In addition, the organic vegetable practices promoted by CECI and CHF are directly relevant for increased incomes as well as family nutrition.

Studies of other USAID-funded projects have shown that when women have access to credit, manage enterprises, and begin new food production, as in these programs, that child nutrition improves. Thus the target level “% of stunted children ... reduced by 60%”<sup>10</sup> will be directly influenced by these activities.

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<sup>9</sup> “Results Package and Framework for USAID/G-CAP’s Strategic Objective 2, Increased Rural Household Income and Food Security, not dated.

<sup>10</sup> Op. Cite, p. 7

### ***Reference:***

Merely increasing income levels is not sufficient, however. USAID/G-CAP is interested in helping poor rural families develop increases in income that are sustainable into the future: temporary or short-term increases in income would not be considered a program success.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***Evidence:***

The concern here is the “sustainability” issue. This is addressed organization by organization, practice by practice in Section XI. Suffice it to say, the agroforestry practices of CHF and the organic farming practices of CECI are all independent of outside and off-farm resources. It is a recommendation of the evaluators that the green market potential for coffee and cardamom be studied because the sustainability of ASOBAGRI and the promotion of organically produced crops depend upon the stability of these markets. When it comes to the credit programs, the increased incomes that come about by the fixed capital loans are sustainable. When it comes to working capital in the communal bank credit mode, the sustainability depends upon the communal banks assumption of the management of the seed capital and, also, upon the savings rate of the members. If the recommendation, that the seed capital be transferred to the communal banks, is followed, and the savings continued, then there is reason to believe that the system will continue in each community where established. These communal banks will mobilize community savings and provide a mechanism for expanding small business capital

### ***Reference***

“Furthermore, because these market areas are located near environmentally protected areas, the mission activities in these towns will be planned to improve local farming and business practices to minimize damage to these sensitive areas.”<sup>12</sup>

### ***Evidence:***

The agroforestry practices of CHF and the organic production techniques of CECI directly address this issue. Moreover, the organic products and “green market” are appropriate business practices to achieve the stated goal. The suggested sustainable forest management approach fits both projects and will reinforce this goal.

### ***Reference:***

The SO text states that by “concentrating assistance in these selected areas increases the prospect of accelerating the rural transformation process and bringing about sustainable .... From multiple perspectives, USAID/G-CAP’s assistance will systematically reduce the transaction costs to access financing, technical assistance, marketing systems and information....by concentrating

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<sup>11</sup> “Results Package and Framework for USAID/G-CAP’s Strategic Objective 2, Increased Rural Household Income and Food Security, not dated. p.3

<sup>12</sup> Op. cite, p.5.

efforts rather than dispersing...In addition, raising incomes of diverse elements of the population can generate synergies and economic interactions that produce the critical mass...”<sup>13</sup>

***Evidence:***

As noted above, the potential impact of AMVI on the cost of marketing can not be overstated. This is clearly a basic activity upon which the remaining activities will depend. In this assessment’s discussion of the communal banking and enterprise credit systems in Barillas and Ixcán, it points out that the value of the systems is as much in the area of linking the communities and individuals to the banking system as it is in providing credit. Without this investment in the credit system and in the development of the ability to handle credit and know the institutions, the inclusion of the marginal and diverse population (virtually all of the villagers) in trade and commerce will remain at a subsistence level. The evaluators put a great deal of emphasis on the “concentration” aspect and recommended that both organizations (CHF and CECI) ensure that the credit system, the social infrastructure, and the production activities are in the same communities. The problem was not the activities per se, but that they are dispersed.

The activities of these two CIT programs are directly related to the four Intermediate Results of the SO:

IR-1: More small farmers engaged in higher value production; under this IR the conditions posited are a) secure access to land (not an overtly funded activity, but the reduction of conflict between groups, especially in Ixcán and Alta Verapaz, will contribute to this end); b) sustainable agricultural production practices (already discussed as outputs of both CECI and CHF); and c) increase their productivity and sales in the market economy (both projects have worked on the former, CECI on the latter, and CHF is doing studies on the latter).

IR-2: More micro entrepreneurs expanding their business; (The four activities cited are all activities that the present projects are carrying out.)

IR-3: Market towns stimulating economic growth. The description includes three areas of support: 1) expansion of businesses in targeted market towns; 2) infrastructure projects (CECI, in a prior project did this, and CHF has been doing this); and 3) assistance to NGOs and Coops to expand ( both CHF and CECI are doing this too).

IR-4: Improved family nutrition. The SO strategy is that IRs 1-3 will lead to this, plus additional Title II food resources of extremely impoverished families. Neither CECI nor CHF engage in this activity on a “normal” basis. CHF did help distribute food after hurricane Mitch. Both organizations note that donations of any kind tend to confuse the issue of development, plus they are not sustainable inputs. One should reconsider this approach as mentioned under “market town growth and development.”<sup>14</sup> A close relationship with the two projects on planning the use of “food for work” should be done before commitments by the Mission in these areas are made in order to avoid mixed signals. This will require coordination between CARE and CRS

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<sup>13</sup> Op. cite, p.6

<sup>14</sup> Op. Cite. P. 16

(both very independent-minded organizations that will require Mission attention to be successful) with CHF in Ixcan and Chisec and CARE with CECI in Barillas and San Mateo. It is not clear if this will also include monitored inputs, but, if that is the case, then the coordination of the credit and technical inputs will be crucial.

The importance of ANACAFE and BANRURAL for the success of the SO is quite clear, and the experience which CECI and CHF have had with these organizations are useful to judge the effectiveness and efficiency of them as partners in these specific areas. It is recommended that the Mission consult with CECI and CHF to plan the implementation of new activities prior to making commitments.

For the above reasons, it was concluded that the present activities, which were funded under the Peace Special Objective, are relevant to and should be continued under the Emerging Incomes Special Objective.

Before closing this section there is one detail in reference to the second phase of the CECI Cooperative Agreement which deserves mention.

We note that in the MAARD<sup>15</sup> of USAID to CECI for the second phase, it specifies that support for the five communal groups doing productive activities (cardamom dryers, coffee depulping) should end during the first year and that there is no provision for additional groups. While the evaluation team is in agreement that the groups should be consolidated, it is important to expand the terms of the second phase to include at least 10 more of these types of enterprises in order to expand and not truncate the process. These agro-industries are one of the few opportunities for adding value at the communal level and are crucial for quality control that is the basis for ASOBAGRI's success. In the same vein, we encourage the continuation and expansion of the line of credit and training of women's groups beyond the anticipated result of 10 because these are one of the few opportunities for increasing women's incomes while increasing economic multipliers in the community.

While on the subject of increasing the activities that are related to women, it is important to point out that although the evaluation team found that the communal banking effort in Ixcan and the microenterprise credit in Barillas will not be self-sustaining in the sense of generating sufficient interest income to support the training and administration costs, it is still recommended that the program continue as a social investment in communities and women. In the section on exit strategies, we propose ways to make this social investment and to end the program in a way that will leave an impact on the communities and the women who will be able to continue to use the credit.

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<sup>15</sup> MAARD No. 520-0426-80025, Attachment D, p. 4, 25 NOV 1998



## VIII. NEW COMPONENTS AND ACTIVITIES

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As was pointed out, the two projects have been built on different economic and ecological bases that have determined the options available to them for development. Nevertheless, there are practices and institutions developed on each project which can now be exchanged to help each project increase its impact at a faster rate. The potential for synergistic advances<sup>16</sup> is great, but before describing those potentials, an important cautionary note and corresponding activity is presented.

***1) If not done already, then a study of the coffee, achiote, and cardamom organic products market and its potential should be added.***

As demonstrated in the CIT program, certified, organic production of these crops offers a premium for the producers. Organic coffee exports are being promoted in most coffee countries in the Americas, and there has been at least two decades of USAID support for integrated pest management and biological controls that enhance this effort. Parallel to this production side has been the promotion of consumer awareness of developing the so-called “green market.” This may be the “real” green revolution, and, then again, it may only be a market niche of finite size that may not be adequate for the production.

It is recommended that a market study be done on the actual and potential rate of growth of the “green market” for these crops. Such a study should include the way that specific local names or regional names are received, and the options for access to those markets. This should be compared with the extent that USAID missions and other international donors are promoting these crops in the region. In the past, region-wide promotion of non-traditional exports (miniature vegetables, bell peppers, cucumbers, melons, etc.) thought to be good alternatives for smallholders, met with

difficulties when seasonal or window markets were saturated. The losses suffered were setbacks for the farmer groups as well as the USAID officers who promoted them. While the organic products in these projects are not aimed at window markets, they are aimed at market niches that may or may not be just as fragile. Fortunately these crops are not perishable and can be stored for longer periods. Cardamom in the late 1970s was considered to be a good alternative to lowland coffee and was promoted only to have the market saturated and the price decline. There are



*Farmers' group with cardamom dryer – adds value and improves quality, Agua Azul, Barillas.*

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<sup>16</sup> In reality, there have been these exchanges. CHF said that they greatly appreciated the help that CECI provided to them at the beginning and, especially, helping them link up with CESIDE for CHF's communal banking program. At the same time, CHF took the Barillas UTM manager to Costa Rica to see the AMV-Upala operation so that CECI could help start a road maintenance organization there in Barillas.

stands of cardamom remaining from those efforts in Ixcán, but before undertaking a massive promotion of organic cardamom, it would be appropriate to analyze the market potential and be aware of the limits to the market.

That cautionary note and recommendation being made, we can now go on to other new activities.

## **2) *Exchanges between CECI and CHF on the marketing and production of cardamom.***

As noted, cardamom was promoted in Ixcán two decades ago and stands still exist. The complaint of the farmers in Ixcán is that the price is low (less than \$100 per sack according to CHF's findings). On the other hand, CECI has promoted organic production practices, seed selection for the improvement of the varieties, drying systems, and quality control, which all tie into the organic marketing channel with FORESTRADE, and have been able to obtain about \$250 in the organic market. CHF has proposed to look into cash crops during the second phase<sup>17</sup> but discards the potential for cardamom. Perhaps it is premature to ignore cardamom, given CECI's experience with cardamom in the lower altitudes of Barillas, which has the same ecological area as Ixcán. The practices may be transferable and the same marketing channels and certification can be used for a quick start at diversification in Ixcán. The drying and selection processes offer opportunities for value added at the community level and also for the credit program for enterprises that CHF has proposed for the second phase.

It is probable that a bridge over the Ixcán River will make exchange between these two areas economical in the near future. The next three recommendations involve exchanges between CECI and CHF personnel. Funds and time need to be allocated in order for this to be done systematically. It would be useful to establish radio links between the two projects and to have a series of weekly conversations between personnel, especially after they have seen each other's work and if marketing is coordinated.

## **3) *Exchanges between CECI and CHF in agroforestry practices.***



*Agroforestry – Gandul and Ciprés for improved soil awaiting rainy season for corn planting.*

CECI has focused on cash crop production and practices, and while cardamom and coffee grow in a forest setting (i.e., shade), CECI has not dealt with agroforestry for subsistence crops in the way that CHF has done in developing its agroforestry systems for food crops. The trees and medium-cycle legumes that CHF have found to be excellent intercropping and transition species with corn and beans are appropriate for the lowland area (and probably for the upland too) of Barillas. Subsistence crops are part of all smallholders' efforts in Barillas, and CECI has been promoting live barriers and contours on the steeper slopes; this effort could be greatly enhanced by an exchange with CHF.

<sup>17</sup> Expansion Proposal, Communities in Transition, Cooperative Housing Foundation, Feb 1998, p.25

#### 4) *The addition of a Forest Management Extension component.*

To date, agroforestry has consisted of introducing a few forest species into the short-cycle cropping system, or cultivating cash crops in the shade of forest species. In neither case is conservation of the composition of species of a forest the goal. This is not to denigrate the efforts by CECI or CHF, but the contrast must be clearly stated. The focus needs to be shifted to the management of forests because there are forest plots on most farms in the lowlands of Barillas and in Ixcán. Because of the settlement patterns, there may be forest areas in communities.

There seems to have been a misunderstanding of the forest characteristics in both municipalities in the sense that it was perceived that large tracts of undisturbed broad leaf forests remain. The misperception was probably due in part to aggregate statistics indicating 50 percent to 65 percent of the area in forests, and in part to not having seen the advance of agriculture. In the recent study done by APESA for CECI and CHF, it is clear that less than half of the area is in undisturbed forests. That figure, however, has to be put into the perspective that, with little exception, the land has been parceled and has owners.



*Division of land among communities –  
Municipality of Ixcán.*

Title disputes may occur, but the land has owners, with the average holding being about 22 manzanas. These holdings are partly in forest, partly in scrub/crop rotation, and partly in crops. The degree of intervention in the forest part varies, and a given family's parcel may be from 20 percent to 80 percent forest.



*Progression of slash and burn toward forest –lowlands  
of Barillas.*

As with any land management approach, the focus should be on the owner and the pattern of use before management practices and plans can be introduced. What is clear is that the strategy needs to focus on “woodlot” management and not extensive forest management for general conservation purposes; this is not a “commons” problem, but rather a family land use problem.

It may be that some lowland areas of Barillas, where there are ridges, may have forest areas that are contiguous and on such slopes that community land use plans are possible. CECI



has proposed 12 communities with forest management plans for the second phase of about 1,000 hectares per community. This approach fits nicely with the associative philosophy that CECI has used successfully with extension and marketing, and it may be appropriate in some communities where the topography has limited the intervention of whole areas, but the individual tenure does not bode well for a commons approach.

In Ixcan, CHF has used agricultural promoters who focus on individual farms and farmer needs. At the same time, the promotion of tree inter-cropping and the transition of steep cropland into rapid growth forest species for construction included the collection and purchase of seeds from selected trees in the farmers' forests. This latter aspect has begun to increase the awareness of the value of forests per se.

Finally, before the recommendation itself, one notes that there are sawmills in Ixcan and that, when walking along the trails to the communities, there are the remains of individual trees taken for planks using inefficient chainsaw techniques. One sees the undervalue of the wood taken in the walls of the houses made of perfectly clear, wide planks; in the use of wood for shingles; and in the types of colored woods used for ordinary purposes. The inefficient techniques are also seen in the size of the billets which mules and men pull from the forests. The point being that forest products are undervalued and being inefficiently harvested. If they are undervalued, there is little incentive to manage them.

It is recommended that a forest management activity be added to both projects building upon the experience and education of the CHF Agroforestry Coordinator and the experience that the new CECI volunteer has from Africa. The goal should be the sustainable management of the forest plots to enhance family income. Furthermore, CECI's experience with FORESTRADE should provide the link to the "green market" for wood and other forest products. Certified, sustainably managed tropical forests have been accomplished in other countries. One nearby project that could be seen is the GTZ project in Quintana Roo, Mexico, which has been working for over 20 years. This link would provide international guidelines and a certification process, as well as price incentives for these practices.<sup>18</sup>



*Old, eroded cornfield planted to fast-growing trees – also will protect water source at base of the gully, Ixcan.*

##### **5) *Exchange between the UTM of Barillas and Ixcan and the mayors.***

Considering that many of the issues faced by each mayor are common and that both projects are trying to work with the UTMs and the mayors, it would be a useful strategy to let the mayors see

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<sup>18</sup> The ARD team is aware that there are certain environmental restrictions placed on the projects, but it also understands that they are being reviewed at this time. It is important that these issues be tackled rather than thwart the only projects that are making a difference in the area when it comes to sustainable practices. Both CECI and CHF should be encouraged to do the trials of sustainable practices in income producing forestry and commercial scale crops so that these activities will be part of the strategy for resource management in this area.

what the projects are doing in each place. They also could see how the municipalities are developing as technical organizations to solve problems. Such an exchange might enhance the importance of the projects in the eyes of the mayors and the technical units.<sup>19</sup>

**6) Women and labs to control “La Broca” (coffee bean borer).**

The quest for more significant roles that will enhance the status and income of women in development projects is particularly difficult in traditional societies where the division of labor is limited. Fortunately there is an array of roles in which women have proven to have greater ability than men and, at the same time, have greater status and importance for community and family wellbeing. Two examples are the grafting of fruit trees and the management of laboratory conditions. Both of these areas are germane to these projects, and elsewhere it has been suggested that women in the Ixcan project be immediately incorporated into the village nursery program, be taught how to graft fruit trees, and be given the fruit trees for the household garden. This will be an enhancement for the agroforestry component. In this section we refer to a new approach to expand an activity that did not succeed last year in the agreement between ANACAFE and CECI (i.e., the establishment of labs to produce a disease to biologically control the coffee bean borer).



*Women assume responsibility for Lab – a new role for women, a new opportunity for quality and pest control.*

One such lab was tried last year and two men were trained in its management. The lab failed either because the men were not trained well or because the men were not able to maintain the controls necessary for inoculating and reproducing the worms that would have been carried back into the coffee farms to spread the disease to the other coffee bean borers. It has been noticed elsewhere that, typically, when lab situations (milk houses, shrimp larva labs, etc.) are taken over by women, the bacteria count decreases and the productivity increases. At the time of the evaluation, the task had been turned over to two women who are to be trained. CECI project personnel estimate that the loss due to “La Broca” is as high as 18 percent, and that these labs have proven successful in other parts of Guatemala.

It is recommended that women in 10 communities where the Broca is a problem, and where there are organized groups of producers of organic coffee, be trained and that labs be established. Preference should be given to communities where there are women’s groups organized to further strengthen the support network for the women who are trained. This activity would directly support the quality control and organic coffee effort, and would create a new, enhanced role for women in the community.

<sup>19</sup> Members of both UTMs (Barillas and Ixcan) have gone together to the UMV-Upala site, thus the exchange has precedents.



## IX. EXIT STRATEGIES

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CECI and CHF, in their proposals for the second phase, present concrete exit strategies for their work with ASOBAGRI and AMVI that seem realistic and appropriate. Nevertheless, in the remainder of the activities, the objectives and goals are general and aggregated. It is recommended that these general objectives be converted to specific levels of accomplishment that would indicate that it is time to end the presence in given communities and in the municipalities. Toward this end, we present the following examples or illustrations in terms of the components of the projects:

- 1) In the case of the agroforestry extension program in Ixcan and the extension program for organic coffee and cardamom in Barillas, there should be an outside limit of activity to three agricultural cycles in a given community. In addition, given the self-sustaining nature of these practices, the trigger for departure should be as soon as a significant number of farmers are using the practices--for example 30 percent. The determination of what constitutes a critical percentage will come from the experience in the communities this coming year when one can note the "take off" or curve of acceptance. Given that the goal is to extend these practices to the whole municipality, it will be necessary to determine when this can be declared "accomplished." It may not be economical to attempt to have the practices accepted in 100 percent of the communities, but certainly a goal of 70 percent can trigger the declaration that the job has been done.
- 2) In the case of organic production certification, it is a constant year-to-year process that can never end. The "exit" on the project's covering this cost should be immediate in the sense that the real cost of the certification should be covered in the marketing system. This is practicable because a premium is realized upon the first sale of the product. It is important that these costs be estimated and promoted from the beginning.
- 3) The communal banking system in Ixcan and the small enterprise credit program in Barillas require special attention to the desired impact in order to determine the moment of exit from the communities and the municipalities.

In Ixcan, consultants before the evaluation have noted, and we concur, that the system of communal banks probably cannot sustain the administrative and training costs because of the small volume of loans. The purpose of the system is to provide a small amount of credit to women in the communities who would not normally have access to the formal credit system to foment business and income generation. With the communal banking come not only the credit and training in business management, but also a link between the community and the formal banking system in the form of a savings account by each group at BANRURAL. This effort should be considered an investment in human resources as well as in the social formation of communal groups. It should also be considered the link between rural communities and the rural development bank. This investment is where the development value is, and it probably can be considered done when a communal bank has completed three or four cycles. At that time, the savings and the original seed capital should be formally transferred to the group to be managed as their "internal fund" for which they are wholly responsible, and, at the same time, the

technical assistance and supervision should end. It would be up to the women to decide if they need the continuing relationship with BANRURAL. If the project wanted to increase the amount of capital going to these communal banks, a fiduciary arrangement with BANRURAL could be established with the bank. This arrangement would decide the amount that would be loaned to each communal bank--perhaps based on the savings to date and the collateral that the women could provide. It cannot be stressed enough that these credit activities be in the same communities as the production and marketing efforts.

In Barillas, the enterprise credit system is based on individual loans rather than group loans, and the link to BANRURAL is directly to the borrower after the first "educational loan" is repaid. At the time of the evaluation, only six of nine businesses had "graduated." It is therefore too early to determine if BANRURAL will readily incorporate and have the funds to continue to service these clients. Nevertheless, CECI has built into this system its individual exit strategy of one loan. The question remains, How many loans should make up the program before it ends? Again, as the title "educational loan" implies, it is a social investment program and the goal should be to link a critical mass of people from each community to BANRURAL and to assure that a substantial proportion of the communities have a link to the bank. As suggested before, the number of communities could be the same as where there are other project activities to support the development of multipliers. As with Ixcán, it cannot be stressed enough that these credit activities be in the same communities as the production and marketing efforts.



## **X. ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF DATA**

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In general, both grantees had good information, but it was not as ordered and retrievable as it should be. That is, the information was dispersed among offices and project personnel who could access it by recall, but it was not a “management information system” because a “database” mentality was not used to coordinate its collection and order its storage. Although the directors and some personnel could have analyzed the information, they had day-to-day responsibilities that took priority. The validity of the periodic and annual reports and figures cited is not in question, but the system used to generate the reports and conclusion could be much more efficient and reliable.

### **A. Barillas**

CECI began its work with an excellent baseline survey of 97 communities. The information collected is extremely valuable from a project planning perspective and as a baseline of community indicators that are being changed by the project. The information has been stored and is retrievable by means of MS ACCESS. However, the information has not been used for key aspects of the project. For example, one of the excellent sections of the data is on market services and where services are sought. This information is ideal for the project focus on decentralization of services and could have, and should be, used to guide the location of marketing services and the focus of enterprise loans. As was mentioned, CECI installed geographic information software in its computer and that of the Municipal Technical Unit, but, unfortunately, aside from the Project Director, there isn't a person on the team or in the municipality with the expertise to analyze and give meaning to this data. Some personnel can retrieve the variables, but to give it meaning for planning is another matter. There should be a second measure of most of the same variables during the second phase so advances can be documented.

Most of the information on the accomplishments of the project is in the form of MS Word text files or in the form of reports. Some of it is in chronological order, but it is to be found in each of the component Coordinators' offices, and retrieval depends upon their personal ability to recall the report or file where it can be found. This information needs to be gathered and systematized for easy retrieval and feedback to project personnel.

Credit information is in a similar state--that is, found in different forms at BANRURAL, CESIDE, and CECI. While this may be adequate for controlling the individual loans, and there is no quarrel with that system, the information is not in a form that can be used to analyze the impact of the project activities. There should be indicators on the individual or the group receiving the loans to enable tracking of any changes in their incomes or quality of their products that are due to application of technology made possible by the credit.

One of the major impacts of CECI is in the local commodity market, and their reports show comparative figures that support the impact of before-and-after interventions in general, but it is close to anecdotal in quality. It is necessary, during this pilot period, to systematically gather prices being paid “on the street” which can be added to the information on prices paid by

ASOBAGRI. At present, prices paid by ASOBAGRI are in the records, but it should be in a database, with the street prices and the international prices. This information, in graphic form, should go to the farmer groups and they should be shown how to read it. Farmers were very curious about seasonal price trends, and this kind of information would show the accomplishments of ASOBAGRI as a stabilizer or moderator of prices.

## **B. Ixcán**

CHF has improved its capability in the area of monitoring and evaluation during the past year (1998) which has made its reports much more authoritative. Clearly, during the first years of the project it was understaffed, but now there are people assigned to the task. Another important first step by CHF has been the training and use of the agricultural promoters for information gathering. Many of the promoters had been trained to do interviews in a previous project (Habitat) and CHF was able to capitalize on this.

CHF began its information gathering with a series of community profiles that have been very useful as a means to knowing the communities and for the communities to know the project. They were also very useful reading for the evaluation team prior to going to see the project in the communities. This information could be coded into a data bank and used for baseline information because they systematically provide the same variables on each community. At the present time, the information covers approximately 26 communities and should be extended to cover all of the communities if it is to provide a baseline for the municipality. One area of inquiry relating to marketing and the exchange of specific products was not included in the baseline. This would be very useful for the location of productive infrastructure loans.

The new personnel have done some important studies this past year to identify changes brought about by technical assistance (CESIDE staff) and training (agroforestry extension with farmers). Because baseline information was not available, they had to depend upon self-assessment and recall on the part of the people interviewed. This is a valid approach, and although “self-assessment” is impressionistic, it was a good way to catch up and to assess what had been accomplished. With this experience and the staff to do it, more systematic before-and-after surveys can be planned. One of the important areas of inquiry, related to exit strategies as well as impact assessment, is to do simple surveys of communities periodically to document the spread of the agroforestry practices within communities.

One of CHF’s major accomplishments, via AMVI and the bridges, will be in the area of transportation costs, the availability of buyers, and prices for commodities. Therefore, it is important that the baseline data be gathered on these variables in all of the communities in the municipality so that the impact can be documented. This type of information is easily gathered from key informants at the community level and can be added to the community profiles that need to be done.

The communal banking system should be having an impact on the services offered in the communities as well as the incomes of the women. It is important to collaborate with CESIDE to be sure that information is gathered on the businesses of the women to show how incomes and

the volume of business have changed. As reported in the case of CECI and CESIDE, the data is dispersed and needs to be ordered.

The following observations and suggestions on monitoring and evaluation apply to both CECI and CHF.

The term “data bank” is in reference to an array of information that can be stored in a simple spreadsheet such as Excel or Lotus with the individual, community, or group given a line; the columns are simply the variables being tracked on those individuals. The management information system consists of that basic array of data, the software to analyze it (Access, SPSS, SAS, MSTAT, etc.), and professionals who can analyze the information and process it for the remainder of the team. Importantly, that professional has to help the remainder of the team to systematically gather and provide the information. It is not appropriate to hire programmers to create an MIS, as they seldom produce information during the life of the project. Standard, interactive software should be used, and the person in charge of the MIS should be a professional in the field of social and economic development with software skills--not a computer systems person or a programmer.

Both CHF and CECI have obtained geographic information from satellite images. CECI is using ARC-VIEW with the municipality for making road maps. CHF's agreement with APESA includes the use and training in ARC-View. This same capability should be installed in AMVI's offices and shared with the municipality. This software can also be used to show the social and economic data from the community profiles as well as the “state of the ecology” information which should be related to the proposed forestry management activity, the land management plans that CECI proposes, and the spread of the agroforestry practices. The utility of this kind of information and format for municipal development planning cannot be understated. Both projects will need to modify their budgets to include the software and hardware to do this.

Although not “data” per se, each project has generated reports that describe the evolution of the activities, but much of the information is in the files and the minds of project personnel. Considering that these are seen as the generator of pilot projects, there should be a systematic approach to doing case studies of the initiatives. As in the data management area, a person should be employed to interview the personnel and to pull together the information to write and then follow up on the key pilot initiatives. This could be a part-time or consultant position. The main observation is that as project personnel leave, this information will be lost.

One last, cautionary note: the purpose of these information systems is to have and provide punctual information directly related to project activities. There is a tendency for these systems to “take on a life of their own” and to become isolated from project activities. The urge to gather everything is tremendous, but this adds to the data management burden and is an abuse of the people being interviewed. The reference point should be the results indicators from the results framework of the project as well as the Intermediate Results and the Strategic Objective.



## **XI. APPRAISAL OF THE POTENTIAL FOR MAXIMIZING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GUATEMALANS**

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Item II-D of the Terms of Reference of the evaluation stated, “appraisal of the potential for maximizing the responsibilities of Guatemalans for implementing activity components, or otherwise increasing Guatemalan involvement for sustaining positive impact and results.” It is assumed that the question is in reference to sustainability of the project after the project has ended. Reference will be made to the major sustainability efforts of each project.

### **A. Agroforestry and Organic Agricultural Practices**

Agricultural and agroforestry practices will be self-sustaining at the village level because they do not depend upon outside inputs (technical assistance, credit or chemicals); they have an excellent chance of becoming the new “traditional practices.” As mentioned in the section on data, there is little information on on-farm economics, but one case illustrates the potential for increased incomes and, thus, the sustained interest on the part of farmers in the systems. The farmer indicated that the past corn crop on the parcel brought in Q350, and the present system on that parcel of pineapple and chili peppers would bring Q9,500. This is a radical change in crops, and, unfortunately, there was no data simply on increased corn production. The farm mentioned was near the road and Cantabal, making the pineapple a marketable crop. Clearly, if everyone plants pineapple the market could be saturated. In the interviews with women about the vegetable plots that they had planted, they mentioned that their market was in the community itself and that they could realize incomes of a Q100 to Q300 from a small garden. This leads one to conclude that the systems will be adopted. CHF began working with women on organic vegetable production in San Pablo and another group of women has taken a parcel on the ICTA station for trials. Their products should find customers in the relatively nearby vegetable market in Cantabal where produce arrives from as far away as Mexico, Coban, and Huehuetenango.

However, the continued development of new systems for soil conservation and increased productivity by a Guatemalan institution is not probable. CHF has made preliminary economic projections of the ICTA station as a self-sustainable provider of seeds for hearts of palm as well as the sale of nursery stock. The main challenge will be an agreement with ICTA to make it an independent economic enterprise. While ICTA is an important resource in Ixcan for CHF, it is doubtful that ICTA will be funded by the government to do the work that CHF is doing. Given the subsistence farming and the open market for those products (which precludes a “check off” as in the case of organic coffee), an alternative, private source is not likely either. Theoretically ICTA, as a government agency, could do this work, but the last 25 years have shown that it is not politically possible. The current USAID policy toward these institutions has been “privatization” through foundations, and these organizations have not responded to small farmer needs.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The FHIAs (Honduras) and FUNDEAGROs (Ecuador) of Central and South America are the cases in mind.

## B. ASOBAGRI

ASOBAGRI in Barillas has two major obstacles to overcome in order to achieve self-sufficiency. One is the culture of low confidence that surrounds and permeates the membership. This problem has been worked on constantly by CECI, and ground has been gained with a more representative board and success in the market place. The second, the quest for the breakeven point, is the most crucial obstacle to achieving a continuing presence. In its analysis of the “Profit and Loss” statement of ASOBAGRI for 1998, the evaluation team found a positive position of Q16,350, but that positive position considered the subsidy from CECI for administration as an income. To properly review the possibility of self-financing, one has to take away the assumption of a subsidy. In the case of ASOBAGRI, that made them about Q185,000 short of the breakeven point in 1998.

The 1999 budget<sup>21</sup> projects a total of Q556,000 in re-occurring expenses, plus Q223,000 in capital expenditures. The marketing plan for 1999<sup>22</sup> estimates that 8,000 hundred weight of coffee and 1,000 hundred weight of cardamom will be handled by ASOBAGRI in different mixes of traditional and organic forms. Assuming prices similar to the past year (see the following tables), ASOBAGRI will exceed the breakeven point of re-occurring expenses by approximately Q532,000, and, if the capital expenditures are included, a positive net of Q309,000. Clearly, this year’s performance will determine if ASOBAGRI will be economically sustainable.

The costs of the organic certification are included in the above figures, but the cost of the extension program is not. The cost for this service during 1998 was approximately Q112,000. Clearly this could be assumed by ASOBAGRI with the net projected income to make the whole system sustainable.

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<sup>21</sup> “Convenio de Cooperación Técnica” CECI y ASOBAGRI, Barillas, January, 1999

<sup>22</sup> Plan de Comercialización 1998-99 de Café y Cardamom. ASOBAGRI. Barillas, Huehuetenango, Noviembre 1998

<b>ASOBAGRI: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRICES</b>						
<b>(Quetzals per Quintal)</b>						
<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>PURCHASE PRICE</b>	<b>MARKETING COSTS</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>SALES PRICE</b>	<b>MARGIN</b>	
					<b>ABSOLUTE</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
ORGANIC COFFEE	500.00	143.26	643.26	1,072.50	429.24	67%
CONVENTIONAL COFFEE	480.00	22.63	502.63	508.00	5.37	1%
ORGANIC CARDAMOM	1,600.00	57.66	1,657.66	2,000.00	342.34	21%
CONVENTIONAL CARDAMOM	1,500.00	47.16	1,547.16	1,600.00	52.84	3%
SOURCE: Plan de Commercialization 1998-99 de Café y Cardamom. ASOBAGRI. Barillas, Huehuetenango, Noviembre 1998						

<b>ASOBAGRI: BREAKEVEN ANALYSIS – 1999</b>			
<b>PRODUCT</b>	<b>ABSOLUTE MARGIN Q. PER Qq.</b>	<b>PLAN SALE Qq.</b>	<b>TOTAL SALES QUETZALS</b>
ORGANIC COFFEE	429.24	2,000	858,480.00
CONVENTIONAL COFFEE	5.37	6,000	32,220.00
ORGANIC CARDAMOM	342.34	500	171,170.00
CONVENTIONAL CARDAMOM	52.84	500	26,420.00
		TOTAL SALES	1,088,290.00
EXPENSES			
SALARIES		288,000.00	
RECURRING		268,210.00	
CAPITAL		223,000.00	
		TOTAL COSTS	779,210.00
		NET	309,080.00

### **C. CESIDE: Communal Banks in Ixcan and Enterprise Credit in Barillas**

Both of the programs have been discussed in previous sections of this report and other outside consultants have concluded that the programs will not be economically self-sustaining. Their value is as a social and economic investment that strengthens the BANRURAL system by extending its outreach to the marginal population while strengthening communal groups and small businesses. In the section on exit strategies, we have proposed ideas for the successful completion of these activities.

### **D. CHF Organizational Development to CESIDE and the Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation**

CHF has supported the organizational development of both CESIDE and the Rigoberta Menchu Tum Foundation (RMTF). Interviews with members of both organizations, as well as with the people providing that technical assistance, lead the evaluators to conclude that this technical assistance has made both organizations better administratively and better able to promote and manage the grants they receive. Neither organization is set up to manage funds to gain an income—rather, they provide the service of managing projects and funds, as well as training, for donors. Their self-sustainability has been improved and they will continue, as before the project, to provide these services.

With the expansion of the CHF Cooperative Agreement to include work in Alta Verapaz, the coordination of work in community organizing and conflict resolution with the RMTF will take on increased importance because the foundation has done more work in that Department. According to CHF's second phase indicator plan, the RMTF will also cooperate with CHF on community organizing and when conflict resolution is needed at crucial junctures. The organizational development agreement with IDC in support of RMTF ended during the 1998\1999 fiscal year. The RMTF will be paid for services rendered for community organizational work and conflict resolution in specific instances.

### **E. AMVI**

The Ixcan Road Maintenance Association has been mentioned various times in the previous sections from various perspectives. More evaluation time was spent on the question of its sustainability than on any other component of the two projects.

The ARD team reviewed all of the aspects that are relevant to a business plan for a start-up organization such as AMVI (e.g., is the training of the staff appropriate, are the board members active and knowledgeable, is the proposed budget likely to allow it to reach the breakeven point, based on similar works is the equipment appropriate, has the consultant (CHF) done this before with success, is the marketing plan reasonable, is there a clear mission statement, do they have manuals, is there a need for the product, what is the competition like, is the pricing structure competitive while supporting the staff and equipment maintenance, is the approach legal – in this case the roads have to be registered with the Ministry prior to being able to allocate funds for road maintenance, and , is the set of assumptions inclusive as well as realistic?) All of these considerations are “technical,” and the answers are positive with one unknown – “Is the



marketing plan reasonable?" In a Results Framework this would be one of the key assumptions, (i.e., Funding from the Central government will be forthcoming). The team tried to assess the probability of this coming to pass by comparing the context of Ixcán with the context of Upala, Costa Rica, where the CHF co-director in charge of AMVI had developed a similar model and where the ARD Team Leader had prepared the Northern Zone Development Project Paper in 1982 in which the question of roads and their maintenance was of major concern.

AMVI, like its model in Costa Rica, "AMV," will depend upon public funds for its existence. The marketing plan has begun and calls for the members of the board and the representatives of each micro region to promote the concept in the communities and convince them to make the 10 percent commitment as well as lobby at the municipal level. While the model calls for 10 percent of the costs coming from the community serviced (which is way below the usual USAID target of a 25 percent match), the remainder must come from other public sources that depend upon budget allocations by the Guatemalan Congress to the Ministry of Communication, Transportation and Housing and, within that structure, to the maintenance of the roads in Ixcán. While under certain circumstances (in the case of a not-for-profit organization) contracts need not be sent out for bidding, the funds should be bid, and this whole process is based on lobbying and influence.

For emphasis it is repeated: the technical aspects--equipment, training, board of director development, marketing plan--are all well done and not the question when it comes to the self-sustainability of AMVI. The crucial part is that it has to convince two clienteles--the public user and the central government--to pay for services and to allocate funds where neither of them has in the past. The cost-effectiveness is not questioned, nor is the idea that good roads pay in better prices and lower-cost services. Sustainability depends upon sales in the communities and lobbying in Guatemala City--it is that simple, yet it is that difficult to estimate the chances of success.<sup>23</sup>

Fortunately it was also possible to interview the director and technical assistant of a similar project from the Northern Zone (Upala) of Costa Rica, which the CHF director had developed successfully. The comparative analysis of the Upala context<sup>24</sup> vs. the Ixcán context went on for hours, and all of the variables that have been detailed in the case study of AMV-Upala<sup>25</sup> were reviewed. Of particular importance was the strategy for lobbying the central Costa Rican government and the human resources for doing so in Upala; do the AMVI board and the people of Ixcán have similar human resources? The conclusion was that there are influential landowners and business people in Ixcán and that the technical aspects will back up a lobbying effort as they were able to do in the Costa Rican case. Moreover, compared with AMV, AMVI has better equipment to start with and their organizational development has been quicker than the

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<sup>23</sup> The most probable shortfall as AMVI works toward the breakeven point is the flow of funding from FONAPAZ because the funds are kept in Quetzals and, in the meantime, they are devaluing while costs of operation are increasing in real terms. Had Development Assistance funds been available instead of Economic Assistance funds, then this problem could have been avoided. The Mission should be prepared to compensate for this in order to reach the breakeven point in the time planned or AMVI may be short of funds during the third year.

<sup>24</sup> The Coordinator of the ARD evaluation team, Kris Merschrod, had been part of the team which did the project identification document of the Northern Zone Development Project in 1982.

<sup>25</sup> Huffstutlar, Steven, AMV Strengthening Project: Final Report, USAID Grant 515-0235, Agricultural Cooperative Development International, San Jose, Costa Rica, 1995

Costa Rican case. Thus, the conclusion is that AMVI will probably become a viable, self-sustaining organization, managed and funded by Guatemalans at the communal and congressional levels.

## **XII. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION PROGRAMS**

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Recommendations for continuing and strengthening the two programs and their activities have been made throughout the report. The final output to be written here is in response to the call for projecting this experience “to the design and implementation of transition programs in Guatemala and elsewhere.”

As was shown, even in this relatively small area of Guatemala, the historical and ecological differences permitted, as well as discarded, different development options. Projecting these experiences into other Latin American countries requires even greater adjustments in the techniques. For example, when one attempts to put these two experiences, Ixcán and Barillas, into what one reads of Morazán Province in El Salvador with its high population density of different ethnicity, different soils, and economic history, or into the experiences with the Provinces of Ayacucho or Apurímac in Perú with their high and low altitudes, low rainfall, and shallow soils and their long Incan social and economic history – all provinces which experienced “scorched earth” policies and have been in “transition” – one concludes that the only transferable lessons are methodological and general. The methodology for the design of transition programs should include the following points, more or less in chronological order:

- Survey and respond to the basic needs – roads, social infrastructure. Both CECI and CHF did basic surveys of the communities to identify needs and to develop rapport with the people – always being careful not to raise expectations (a common problem). Based on these needs they began the response. Experience here and in the Mountain Region of Peru shows, typically, that roads and social infrastructure are priorities. Participatory planning methods are widely used for this purpose and most of the other steps presented in this section.
- Assess the ecology, land use, and tenure patterns. Both CHF and CECI have been attentive to this aspect and have come forth with innovations that respond to and are based upon these variables. The evaluators have noted that the commonly held perspective on how to preserve the ecology of the region did not take into consideration the land use and tenure patterns; accordingly recommendations were made for forestry management.
- Review cropping systems and their transformation. This approach to the design of programs was also followed by CECI and CHF and used observations and surveys. Farming systems analysis is at least 25 years old and offers manuals and a wealth of expertise.
- Analyze what men and women do in the production process. Although both CHF and CECI did this type of analysis, it was not used to the extent necessary to emphasize and include women in the programs. One must carefully select gender experts to be sure that the person has the experience in identifying new roles and possibilities for women. Consciousness raising among staff is passé.

- Assess the markets and the products. Market analysis and the exchange patterns between communities and the identification of hierarchies from primary to tertiary-level central places is an important first step, and increasingly, the exploration and estimation of window and niche markets are crucial alternatives for smallholder production as alternatives. As was commented, CECI had excellent baseline data for the hierarchy of markets, but did not use it. On the other hand, they successfully identified a niche market for organic coffee and cardamom. CHF did market studies early on, but it is only now, in the second phase that they are beginning to capitalize on those studies.
- Treat all groups, returnees, those who stayed, etc., equally—projects dwelling on one group have been divisive and counterproductive to conflict resolution. This concept comes from the Guatemalan experience and the Peruvian experience. While the plight of the returnee attracts international attention and moves government programs, the plight of the population that has remained and suffered the war in place, is equally as dire. In many cases the returnees are a burden upon the population which has stayed behind, and the community, per se, is in need of reconstruction and assistance. When aid is focused on one part of a community, because of refugee or any other status, it tends to further division and resentment. Usually the level of poverty among the population that has stayed is similar to those returning. Furthermore, from a social systems perspective, the returnees need to form part of the division of labor and also mesh with the existing system; thus it is the whole system that needs the assistance rather than aid to a segment.
- Respond by helping people to organize at the producer, community, and municipal levels to build and repair the infrastructure. At the same time that participatory planning is done, the basis for organizing people to carry out and maintain the project outputs needs to start. This kind of organizational work is typically guided by outsiders because new decision-making structures are needed. These changes can be an opportunity for increased participation or they can reinforce traditional patronage systems. At the same time, the leadership base can be overloaded, which will hinder development of the projects. Thus an outside change agent can offer neutral guidance as well as a new perspective. In the case of CECI, it was noted how this changed the representation of the board of ASOBAGRI from urban to rural. CHF's work in the design of AMVI is another good example of this approach.
- Organize and focus on immediate and future needs, and do not try to resolve directly the differences of opinion from the past. The lesson from both CECI and CHF on conflict resolution is quite clear, and it is analogous to a sound strategy on gender issues. That is, search for new activities, projects, or division of labor that are steps ahead for all involved, and do not focus on trying to resolve old issues.
- Arrange exchanges so that new techniques or organizations can be seen and discussed with similar people who have done it before. Known as *pasantias* in Spanish, these opportunities for participants to see what other people, with whom they can relate, have done in similar circumstances is one of the easiest and most effective

communication tools. It can be as simple as the farmer promoters in CHF's agroforestry extension program, or as complex as the CHF AMVI-AMU exchange. The important thing is to budget and plan for these kinds of activities.

- Have philosophical underpinnings to motivate the team and give immediate guidance as to what and why activities are done and also to provide a vision of where the development effort is going. There has to be a model which “pulls it all together.” In strategic planning, one of the first quests is the “vision statement.” If the strategic planning for the project is done in a participatory manner, then the vision statement should be the product of the team. At the same time as personnel are selected to start the project, the basic values and goals of the project need to be established. Most projects of this nature require a commitment to work under harsh and isolated conditions; thus only highly motivated and committed professionals will make it work. In the case of CECI and CHF, the personnel has been committed professionally and ideologically to the themes of organic production and the cause of the marginal population.
- Project personnel need to “believe in” what is being done and need to relate to the philosophical underpinnings if they are going to be motivated to live and work under difficult conditions. As per the previous item.
- The Mission needs to be flexible (as it has been in this program) once projects are on the ground so that budgets, activities, and personnel can respond to conditions that are not as originally perceived. In this case, the USAID Mission has shown itself to be very flexible. The use of the cooperative agreement as a vehicle for achieving the goal is quite appropriate. What brings about this observation is a tendency for the Agency (USAID), probably as a result of the re-engineering process and tightening of the linkage between budget and results, to attempt to increase the use of contracts tied to specific outputs with predetermined results indicators. While the usual development context is dynamic in social, political, and economic terms, the transition context is even “worse.” The expectations are high, the underlying basis for the conflict is on the surface, the populations may be shifting and resettlement is still happening, rural people may be coming back to urban areas with new cultural patterns or younger generations may not have lived in the “home town.” Thus, in a brief time, project personnel may find that the original design is no longer appropriate or needs major changes in a brief time. Thus Mission personnel need to be prepared to defend changes and to allocate different mixes of resources while changing the results indicators if they were too specific. While the RFP or RFA process may be the administrative framework for granting agreements, there is a practical need for a “dynamic planning process” under these circumstances. For example, usually an organization is given 30, 60, or 90 days after placement of the COP for the first annual work plan and the plan for the project. These plans and accompanying budget form part of the contract; modification of these documents requires a great deal of justification. The recommendation is that the work plan include periodic planning for coming quarters so that the addition of specific activities under a general framework

can be incorporated. Thus the need for amendments should be minimal and the decision-making quick.

It is probable that the local conditions (poverty, isolation, etc.), which were the basis for the conflict, are the same or worse. It is also probable that “transition assistance” is another opportunity to try to address the conditions once again before the population density doubles in 20 years and the next generation concludes that revolution is needed to change the “system.”

This observation brings us to the point of noting that the conflicts in these areas are not, overtly, based on inter-religious, racial, tribal, or ethnic differences that have their roots in antiquity; that is, the combatants were not divided by these differences nor did they fight for those reasons. This has made the work easier and the pragmatic approach to conflict resolution used by the projects possible. The task of transition in countries with those problems (e.g., Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Africa) will require much more effort and creativity to work where those issues predominate.

## CONTACT LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION	LOCATION
Ac, Walter	CESIDE	Regional Coordinator	Ixcán
Adams, Erick	CHF	Planning and Evaluation	Guatemala & Ixcán
AMVI Board 5	AMVI	Members	Ixcán
Baltodano, Federico	Ingenieros Baltran -Costa Rica	Consultant	Guatemala
Banks, Barbara	USAID	Project Officer	Guatemala
Barrientos, Edin	USAID	Project Officer	Guatemala
Bocu, Catalina	FARCOTA, Belgium	Ext.agent cottage Industry	Ixcán
Bornes, Jeff	USAID - ODI	Chief of Demo. Initiatives	Guatemala
Butler, Leticia	USAID	Dep. Director	Guatemala
Campos, Carlos	AMU Upala Costa Rica	Director	Guatemala
Castaneda, Wilson	CHF	Chief - Agroforestry	Guatemala & Ixcán
Chacon, Carlos	USAID	Project Officer	Guatemala, Barillas & Ixcán
Chávez, Wilson	FARCOTA, Belgium	Communal banking	Ixcán
Chester, Elizabeth	MINUGUA	Oversees Socioecon. Peace	Ixcán
Desouval, Kathy	CECIDE COPAZ	Canadian Volunteer	Ixcán
Dolores	CESIDE	Com. Bank Promoter	Ixcán
Donato, Herman	ASOBAGRI	Sec. Board of Directors	Barillas
Dubon, Jorge	CHF\AMVI	Interim Director of AMVI	Ixcán
Durocher, Bettina	MINUGUA, exCECI	Consultant and ex-volunteer	Barillas
Esteban, Leonel	ICTA	Rep. & Head of Station	Ixcán
Farmer	CHF	Farmer, Agroforestry	Ixcán - Kaibil Balam
Felipe	CHF	Extension Agent	Barillas
García, Amadeo	CESIDE	Pres. Board of Directors	Barillas
González Rivera, Francisco	ASOBAGRI	Head Manager	Barillas
Guillen Rolando	CHF	Farmer & Extension Agent	Ixcán - Nueva Esperanza Monte Alegre y Efrata
Huffstutler, Steven	CHF	C0-Director CHF	Guatemala & Ixcán
Ixcán Representatives	Foro de la Mujer	Member of Commission	Ixcán
Jaime	CHF	Extension Agent	Barillas
Jordán, Roberto	CECI	Marketing Advisor to ASOBAGRI	Barillas
Juan	Ministry of Education	Teacher Envi. Ed	Ixcán Monte Alegre
Juárez, Marcia	CECI	Coord. Micro enterprise Comp.	Barillas

Laflamme, Jean	CECI	COP	Barillas
Lopez, Gilberto	DECOPAZ	Planner	Barillas
Lopez, Isaías	CECI	Head of MicroEmpresa Comp.	Barillas
Lopez, Manrique	CECI	Marketing and Extension at ASOBAGRI	Barillas
Lorenzo, Lorenzo M.	CESIDE	Carpenter - credit	Barillas Chancolin
Luis	ANACAFE	Extension Agent	Barillas
MacCarthy, Jack	USAID	PSC Peace Objective	Guatemala
Martin, Diego	ASOBAGRI	Pres. Board of Directors	Barillas
Francisco			
Martínez	CECI	Ext. Agent	Barillas
González, Elida			
Mateo, Miguel	CECI	Agent, Social Organization	Barillas
Mendez, Pedro	FONAPAZ	Rep.in Ixcan	Ixcan
Mérida, Jorge	ASOBAGRI	VP of Board of Directors	Barillas
Efraín			
Montejo, Benjamin	CECI	Coordinator Agroforestry	Barillas
Morales, Luis	Ministry of Education	Village Environ. Educ. Prof	Ixcán Monte Alegre
Noelia	BANRURAL	Officer Enterprise Credit	Barillas
Núñez, Delia	CHF	Com. Banks coordinator	Ixcan
Ortiz, Lourdes	CECI	Official WID and Org. Comp.	Barillas
Oscar	ANACAFE	Bio. Control Spec. Broca Labs	Barillas
Pablo	CHF	Farmer in Agroforestry activity	Ixcan Monte Alegre
Paul, Juan	CHF	Farmer in Agroforestry activity	Ixcan Efrata
Posadas, Jaime	ANACAFE	Rep. Guatemala City Office	Barillas
Ramos, Atilio	ADEL	Director	Ixcan
Reyes, Carlos	CESIDE	Com. Bank Promoter	Ixcan
Ribeiro, Julie	MINUGUA	Director of Sub-Office	Barillas
Rivas, Henry	CECI	Marketing and Extension at ASOBAGRI	Barillas
Rodriguez, Jorge	ASOBAGRI	Treasurer	Barillas
Rodriguez, Ronaldo	SEGEPLAN, COMUDUR	Rep. of SEGEPLAN in Ixcan	Ixcan
Samayoa, Sergio	ASOBAGRI	Sec. Borad of Directors	Barillas
Donato			
Santos, Lourdes	CHF	Asist.Agroforestry & Envi. Educ.	Ixcán



Schenck, James	CHF	C0-Director CHF	Guatemala & Ixcán
Schultz, Christina	CHF	Org. Deve. Advisor AMVI & CESIDE	Guatemala & Ixcán
Shopkeepers (2)	Market - Centinela Grande	Shopkeepers	Barillas-Centinela
Solovi, Federico	FACOTA-Belgica	Com. Bank Promoter	Ixcán
Tello, Dilma	CECI	Women & Devel. Officer	Barillas & Quixabaj
Thompson, Carol	CHF	Civil Eng. Social Infrastructure	Ixcán
Various Farmers	CECI	Vegetables	Quixabaj
Various Farmers	CECI	Member Cardamom Dryer	Barillas - Rio Azul
Various Farmers	CECI	Coffee Organic Practices	Quixabaj
Various Farmers	CECI	Cardamom Seed Selection	Barillas Rio Azul
Villatoro, Pedro	ASOBAGRI	Member, Board of Directors	Barillas
Villeda, Arturo	ANACAFE	Rep. Guatemala City Office	Barillas
Vinicio, Sergio	CHF	Accountant	Ixcán
William	CECI	Extension Agent	Barillas
Women (2)	Lab. Broca Control	Members	Las Victorias, Barillas
Women, Com. Bank (3)	Communal Bank	Pres, Sec. & Treasurer	Ixcán Nueva Esperanza
Women's commission (20)	SEGEPLAN	Members for Munic. Plan	Ixcán
Women's group (10)	Las Margaritas	Mill for Tortilla dough	Barillas S. F. Momonlac
Women's group (10)	Flor de Café	Candle making, Veg. Garden	Sta. Eulalia Chojzunil
Women's group (17)	Communal Bank	Members	Ixcán Nueva Jerusalem
Zepeda, Alejandro	DECOPAZ-Ixcán	Coordinator	Ixcán
Zepeda, Rubencio	ADEL	Rep. Micro-Region 1	Ixcán

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